





Sevenoaks
DISTRICT COUNCIL
Despatched: 08.07.15

CABINET
16 July 2015 at 7.00 pm
Conference Room, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks

AGENDA

Membership:

Chairman: Cllr. Fleming Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Lowe
Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Hogarth, Piper and Searles

	<u>Pages</u>	<u>Contact</u>
Apologies for Absence		
1. Minutes To agree the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 4 June 2015, as a correct record	(Pages 1 - 4)	
2. Declarations of interest Any interests not already registered		
3. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)		
4. Matters referred from Council, Audit Committee, Scrutiny Committee or Cabinet Advisory Committees	(Pages 5 - 6)	
a) Anti-Fraud Team Report (Audit Committee 23 June 2015)	(Pages 7 - 20)	Adrian Rowbotham Tel: 01732 227153
5. Otford Palace Tower	(Pages 19 - 62)	Jim Carrington-West Tel: 01732 227286
		
6. Property Investment Strategy	(Pages 63 - 72)	Adrian Rowbotham Tel: 01732 227153
		

REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET ADVISORY COMMITTEES

7. **Property Disposal Update**

(Pages 73 - 84)

Mark Bradbury
Tel: 01732 227099

(If Members wish to discuss any information contained within Appendices A or C a resolution must be passed to exclude the public and press from the meeting)



EXEMPT ITEMS

Consideration of Exempt Information

Recommendation: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting when considering Appendices A and C of agenda item 6 above, on the grounds that likely disclosure of exempt information is involved as defined by Schedule 12A, paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

Property Disposals Update - Appendices A & C

(Pages 85 - 88)



Indicates a Key Decision



indicates a matter to be referred to Council

To assist in the speedy and efficient despatch of business, Members wishing to obtain factual information on items included on the Agenda are asked to enquire of the appropriate Contact Officer named on a report prior to the day of the meeting.

Should you require a copy of this agenda or any of the reports listed on it in another format please do not hesitate to contact the Democratic Services Team as set out below.

For any other queries concerning this agenda or the meeting please contact:

The Democratic Services Team (01732 227241)

CABINET

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2015 commencing at 7.00 pm

Present: Cllr. Fleming (Chairman)

Cllrs. Dickins, Firth, Hogarth, Lowe and Searles

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. Piper

Cllrs. Dr. Canet, Mrs. Hunter, Maskell, Parkin, Pett, Purves, Scholey, Miss. Stack, Horwood and Raikes were also present.

5. Minutes

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting of Cabinet held on 5 March 2015 and 19 May 2015, be approved and signed as a correct record.

6. Minutes of Advisory Committees

Resolved: That the minutes from the last meetings of the Cabinet Advisory Committees from the 2014/15 municipal year be approved and signed as a correct record.

7. Declarations of interest

There were no additional declarations of interest.

8. Questions from Members (maximum 15 minutes)

The Deputy Portfolio Holder for Planning asked the Leader for an update of the two articles that had appeared in *The Chronicle*, one relating to parking fines and the other relating to the proposed car park.

The Leader reported that the article on parking fines referred to on-street parking and the majority of roads in the article were residential. The Leader clarified that whilst the number of tickets issued had increased by 40% income had not increased by 40%.

In relation to the proposed car park, the Leader reported that there had been a delay whilst Sevenoaks District Council spoke with KCC Highways following concerns that had been raised. Now these have been addressed he felt that a new planning application would be forthcoming.

9. Provisional Outturn 2014-15 and Carry Forward Requests

The Portfolio Holder for Finance introduced a report setting out the provisional outturn figures for 2014/15 and the requests to carry forward unspent budgets into 2015/16 for

Revenue items. The item has previously been considered by the Finance Advisory Committee on 2 June 2015.

There were four requests totalling £204,090 to transfer unspent revenue budgets to earmarked reserves.

A provisional favourable variance of £743,400 was achieved and this variance arose for two reasons:

- (a) Net savings made during the year due to efficiencies, or where income receipts that have been greater than expected. (Where budget variances are expected to be ongoing, they were included as SCIA items for the 2015/16 budget).
- (b) Project activity, commonly time limited, originally scheduled to take place during 2014/15 which has been delayed or where the project start was deferred and the budget is still required to complete the project.

The variance that had been achieved was in line with the target set by Officers. A further £392,000 would be added to the budget stabilisation reserve.

With reference to recommendation (e), the Leader of the Council explained why there was a need to set aside the £60,000. Local Authorities had acted collectively through the Local Government Association (LGA) in defending against legal action that had been brought in relation to fees for personal searches, the LGA's Legal Representatives, Bevan Brittan, had managed to reduce the collective costs incurred by Councils.

With reference to recommendation (d), the Chief Executive explained that the Council's external auditors had recommended that an earmarked Health and Safety reserve be established following a prosecution against the Council that had been brought by the Health and Safety Executive.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- (a) the Revenue 'carry forward' requests totalling £204,090 as set out in paragraph 14 of the report be approved, subject to any amendments suggested by the Finance Advisory Committee;
- (b) the Capital carry forward request totalling £140,000 as set out in paragraph 15 of the report be approved, subject to any amendments suggested by the Finance Advisory Committee;
- (c) A sum of £50,000 be transferred to the Housing Surveys earmarked reserve to enable a Stock Condition survey to be completed in 2015/16;

- (d) a Health and Safety Earmarked Reserve be established, and a sum of £100,000 be transferred to that reserve as at the end of March 2015; and
- (e) A sum of £60,000 be set aside to provide for payment in respect of restitutionary claims and costs in respect of personal search fees.

10. Community Safety Action Plan

The Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development introduced a report seeking approval for the 2015-2016 Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan. The Plan responded to the community safety priorities identified in the recent Strategic Assessment.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Health, who had previously had responsibility for Community Safety reported on the positive work undertaken by the Community Safety Partnership.

In response to a question, the Community Safety Manager explained that the Community Safety Partnership included Kent Police, Kent Fire & Rescue Service, Kent Probation, Health Services, West Kent Housing Association, Moat Homes, Kent County Council, Kenward Trust, Voluntary Action Within Kent and Domestic Abuse Volunteer. This represented a wide range of partner agencies that all work together to address the aims of the Community Safety Partnership. The Community Safety Manager explained that the Action Plan had been developed from an annual strategic assessment.

Members considered the issue of speeding and road safety across the District and expressed concern that Kent Police did not appear to be effectively enforcing speed limits, despite the work undertaken by dedicated volunteer Speed Watch Groups. It was agreed that the Police should be asked to take a more direct approach to speeding and road safety within the District. The previous Portfolio Holder had raised this issues with the Police and Crime Commissioner who had provided assurances that this would be made a priority for the Police.

Members also considered the issues of anti-social behaviour amongst Housing Association tenants. The Chief Executive explained that the Council had been working with West Kent Housing in a partnership approach to address these issues. However, Members expressed frustration that more decisive action was not being taken to address the concerns that were being raised. The Portfolio Holder stressed that he was keen to develop an effective action plan to address the issue of anti-social Housing Association tenants in order to ensure that clear, tangible and evidenced results could be achieved. The Portfolio Holder for Legal and Democratic reported that Moat housing had agreed to review the issue of life-time tenancies and it was suggested that it would be helpful for Members to be informed of the outcome of this review. The Portfolio Holder for Legal and Democratic also reported that she would be interested in working with the Portfolio Holder for Economic and Community Development on the powers conferred to the Council under the Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014. Through the community trigger and community remedy victims and communities were empowered and given them a greater say in how agencies respond to complaints of anti-social behaviour. It was also possible for victims to pursue out-of-court sanctions for offenders.

Members also discussed the issue of fly-tipping. It was agreed that more enforcement work had to be undertaken and that there should be incentives to encourage people to provide evidence that could lead to successful prosecutions for fly-tipping. Members considered that it had to be made easier for residents and businesses to legitimately dump waste and it was suggested that further work be undertaken with Kent County Council to improve the services at Dunbrik.

The Leader requested that Cabinet be provided with updates throughout the year on the progress of the Community Safety Action Plan. It was also suggested that the Council's Scrutiny Committee could also look at partner's delivery half way through the year.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- (a) the Community Safety Strategy and Action Plan for 2015-16 be approved; and
- (b) A mid-year progress report be provided to Cabinet in October 2015.

THE MEETING WAS CONCLUDED AT 7.50 PM

CHAIRMAN

Item 4 (a) – Anti-Fraud Team Report 2014/15

The attached report was considered by the Audit Committee, relevant minute extract below:

Audit Committee – 23 June 2015 (Minute 7)

The Anti-Fraud Manager presented a report setting out the activities of the Anti-Fraud Team during 2014/15 and details of a proposed re-structure of the Team in February 2016. Members also reviewed the Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy, which had been updated to take account of a change in, and align with, the Department for Work & Pensions' Sanctions Policy.

Responding to Members' questions, the Anti-Fraud Manager confirmed that the Team's current role was predominantly as a Housing Benefit anti-fraud team and the past year had seen the highest levels of detected fraud since the shared service had begun, particularly due to a new real-time HMRC data matching service. From February 2016 and the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service (S-FIS) the Team would no longer have responsibility for dealing with Housing Benefit fraud. The Team was seeking to broaden into a Corporate Fraud Team and pick up those areas not covered by the S-FIS. The Anti-Fraud Manager drew Members' attention to the Cost Benefit Analysis 2014/15 which showed a net financial benefit to the council and anticipated that the new team would also benefit the council. The Team would reduce by 1.0 FTE following the restructure.

The Chairman expressed an interest in the Committee considering an update on the Team in February 2016 following the introduction of S-FIS.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Members noted that consideration had been given to impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Resolved: That

- a) the report and the work of the Anti-Fraud Team carried out in 2014/15 and the proposed re-structure of fraud investigation resources in February 2016 be noted; and
- b) it be recommended to Cabinet to approve the Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy.

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ANTI-FRAUD TEAM REPORT 2014/15

Cabinet – 16 July 2015

Report of	Chief Finance Officer
Status:	For Consideration
Also considered by:	Audit Committee – 23 June 2015
Key Decision:	No

This report supports the Key Aim of Effective Delivery of the Corporate Plan

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Searles

Contact Officer(s) Bami Cole, Ext.7236, Glen Moore Ext. 3240.

Recommendation to Audit Committee: That the Committee:

- a) note the content of the report and the work of the Anti-Fraud Team carried out in 2014/15 and the proposed re-structure of fraud investigation resources in February 2016; and
- b) recommend to Cabinet that the updated Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy be approved.

Recommendation to Cabinet: That the updated Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy be approved.

Reason for recommendation: The Audit Committee is required to review the work of the Anti-Fraud Team.

Introduction and Background

1. This report sets out details of the activities of the Anti-Fraud Team during 2014/15 and sets out details a proposed re-structure of the team in February 2016 caused by the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service (S-FIS). Also attached as Appendix B is an updated Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy, which has been updated to take account of a change in the Department for Work & Pensions sanctions policy.
2. This is the third report of the Anti-Fraud Team to the Audit Committee. The Anti-Fraud Team is part of the Audit, Risk and Anti-Fraud shared services working jointly with Dartford Borough Council. The team is responsible for carrying out benefit fraud investigations and assists both Councils in highlighting instances of fraud which could adversely affect the level of taxes/income they collect/receive.

Agenda Item 4a

Summary of Key Issues in the Report

3. Details of the activities of the team during the year 2014/15 are attached as Appendix A to this report. The team's performance is set out in section three of Appendix A and a proposed re-structure of Sevenoaks District Council's fraud investigation services in light of the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service is discussed in sections 4 & 5. Section 5 confirms the team's priorities for 2015/2016.
4. A key highlight for the year is the Anti-Fraud Team's achievement in discovering a record level of benefit fraud during the year and its continued success in assisting the Council's Revenue Departments in highlighting falsely claimed Council Tax discounts which have a direct effect the amount of tax revenue the local authorities can collect.

Key Implications

Financial

Not Applicable

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

The Council is required to have effective anti-fraud arrangements in place in order to safeguard public funds and prevent the pursuance of crime. The anti-fraud team effectively contributes towards the council's fraud prevention initiatives. The DWP proposals may put at risk existing arrangements. Therefore the Council would need to assess the implications of the DWP proposals and its impact on existing arrangements.

Equality Impacts

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users

Conclusions

This report sets out the achievements of a successful year for the Anti-Fraud Team during 2014/15 and outlines a proposed re-structure of fraud investigation resources caused by the creation of the Single Fraud Investigation Service. Members are requested to note the report and approve the updated Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy.

Appendices

Appendix A – not included as has no relevance to the action concerned – but can be viewed at

<http://cds.sevenoaks.gov.uk/documents/s23535/07%20Anti-Fraud%20Team%20Report%202014-15%20-%20Appendix%20A.pdf>

Appendix B – Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy

Background Papers:

None.

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer

Audit, Risk & Anti-Fraud Team

Housing Benefit

Local Council Tax Support

ANTI-FRAUD, SANCTIONS AND PROSECUTION POLICY



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Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Anti-Fraud Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 In 2010 Sevenoaks District Council and Dartford Borough Council combined their Audit & Fraud and Revenues & Benefits Services into single shared services. The primary aim of this joint venture was to continue to provide a high quality service, supporting the most vulnerable members within the two districts, in the most efficient and cost effective way.
- 1.2 The Council has a zero-tolerance to all forms of fraud & corruption. This message is keenly promoted through the issuing of a trio of joint working policies – The Anti-Fraud & Corruption Strategy, The Whistle-blowing Strategy and this policy, The Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy.
- 1.3 Housing Benefit (HB) is paid to assist people on a low income to meet the rental liability on their main and principal home. Council Tax Support (CTS) is paid to assist people on a low income to meet the annual Council Tax liability on their main and principal home. Housing Benefit is a means-tested benefit, administered by local authorities, on behalf of the Department for Work & Pensions (DWP). Council Tax Support is a means-tested Council Tax discount administered by local authorities.
- 1.4 The Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Anti-Fraud Policy re-enforces the Council's commitment to :
- Preventing fraud and error entering the benefit/discount assessment caseloads by having robust internal systems and checking procedures in place.
 - Detecting incorrect and fraudulent claims for both benefit and discounts by running pro-active drives as well as fully participating in all the government led anti-fraud data-match initiatives.
 - Putting incorrect claims right quickly and getting back what we are owed.
 - Issuing sanctions, in line with the joint Sanctions and Prosecution Policy, against people proven to have cheated the system.
 - Where appropriate, deter future fraudulent claims by publicising the work of the Anti-Fraud Team and the punishments handed out by courts in prosecution cases.
- 1.5 The Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Anti-Fraud, Sanctions and Prosecution Policy will be reviewed annually to take into account any legislative and procedural changes.

2.0 Definition of Benefit Fraud

2.1 Benefit fraud is where a person, dishonestly, or not, whilst applying for or in receipt of a Social Security benefit:

- makes a false statement,
- produces a false document and/or
- fails to promptly notify of a relevant change in circumstances which the person knows will affect the rate of benefit there are entitled to/or are in receipt of.

2.2 Most benefit fraud offences are prosecuted under the Social Security Administration Act 1992:

- Section 112(1)a – making a false statement, producing a false document
- Section 112(1A) – failing to report a relevant change in circumstances.
- Section 111A – obtaining benefit dishonestly.

However other relevant pieces of legislation can be used, for example the Fraud Act 2006, where the crime is of a specific type.

3.0 Council Tax Support Fraud

3.1 Council Tax Support came into existence on 1st April 2013 and replaced Council Tax Benefit.

3.2 Council Tax Benefit was a Social Security benefit administered by local authorities on behalf of the Department for Work & Pensions. Council Tax Support is a discount awarded against the annual Council Tax liability, by local authorities, created by the Local Government Finance Act 2012.

3.3 Council Tax Support Fraud offences will be prosecuted under section 14B of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

4.0 The Anti-Fraud Team

4.1 The Anti-Fraud Team has a main base at Dartford Borough Council's Civic Centre in Dartford and also a hot-desk arrangement at Sevenoaks District Council's Argyle Road offices in Sevenoaks. The team comprises specially trained officers, responsible for investigating allegations of fraud & corruption for both Sevenoaks District Council and Dartford Borough Council.

4.2 The teams' main role is the investigation and detection of suspected Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support frauds, but where called upon, the officers will conduct specific enquiries relating to Housing Tenancy fraud, Council Tax fraud and other frauds found within local government.

The Anti-Fraud Team's main objectives are:

- Assist with the creation of systems which help prevent fraud from entering the system and to unearth fraud once it has established itself.
 - To teach front-line staff techniques of how to identify fraud and instil confidence in the procedure for reporting suspicions relating to potential fraudulent claims and how they can seek advice for handling such situations.
 - To maximise the potential results and effectiveness of data-matching exercises available to local councils which seek to identify fraud using all the appropriate legal gateways open to them.
 - To facilitate joint working with external anti-fraud agencies to ensure that the councils have a cohesive approach to the fraud investigation process.
 - To investigate instances of suspected benefit fraud, collate evidence which assists in the determination of the validity of a benefit claim and to take appropriate action against any perpetrators.
- 4.3 The Anti-Fraud Team is managed by the Fraud Manager, who reports to the Audit, Risk & Anti-Fraud Manager and is responsible for the day-to-day management of 4 Investigation Officers (2 full-time, 2 part-time) operating across two sites.
- 4.4 Cases of suspected benefit fraud can be referred to the Anti-Fraud Team electronically by members of the Benefit Assessment Team (via forms located on the benefit operating system 'Academy') or via e-mail/in writing from all other internal departments. There is a dedicated fraud hotline (0800 496 3245) situated within the Dartford office of the Anti-Fraud Team. Outside office hours there is an answerphone service attached to this number.
- 5.0 Culture**
- 5.1 The Council takes any form of fraud or corruption very seriously. Separate Anti-Fraud & Corruption and Whistleblowing policies have been devised to embrace the issues of fraud and corruption. The Whistleblowing Policy specifically encourages both staff and members of the public to report such matters, in confidence, to the Council.
- 5.2 The Council is committed to ensuring that benefit is paid to only those who are entitled to receive it.
- 5.3 The Council is committed to ensuring that the benefits service is easily accessible and can be taken up by all members of society irrespective of their social status or background.
- 5.4 The Council will, where appropriate, work in co-operation with external agencies such as the Department for Work & Pensions, the Police, Her Majesty's Customs & Excise, the Border Force Agency and other local authorities in order to combat benefit fraud.

- 5.5 The Council will maintain and advertise a 24-hour reporting line (0800 496 3245 and other points of reference felt appropriate) so suspected benefit fraud can be reported.
- 5.6 All reports of suspected fraud will be logged and assessed in line with the joint fraud referral processing policy (within at least 10-working days) and an appropriate course of action assigned to each allegation.
- 5.7 The Council will, where proportionate and reasonable, actively report successive prosecutions through local media sources in order to promote and publicise the work of the Fraud Team to act as a deterrent to other would-be benefit fraudsters.
- 5.8 All investigation staff will receive quality training to ensure that investigations are conducted in accordance with the relevant legislation and that all procedures & practices are lawful and fair.
- 5.9 The Council will actively seek the repayment of **all** overpaid benefit deemed recoverable.

6.0 Prevention, Detection and Investigation

- 6.1 All benefit staff can contact the Anti-Fraud Team by telephone or e-mail to receive advice and guidance in relation to the handling of potential fraudulent claims for benefit/discounts and they will receive regular updates of any emerging trends in the field of benefit fraud which they need to be aware of when they are examining claims for Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support.
- 6.2 Benefit Staff will receive regular reports on the Fraud Team's successes and specifically the way in which these cases were discovered, so that useful lessons can be learned, which will hopefully prevent more fraudulent claims entering the system in the future.
- 6.3 Sevenoaks District Council is fully committed to all the available government anti-fraud schemes and performance measures (For example, Housing Benefit Matching Service (HBMS), National Fraud Initiative (NFI)) and regularly allow their benefits data to be cross-matched with outside organisations for the lawful purpose of highlighting potential instances of fraud within the benefits caseload.
- 6.4 All investigators are PINS accredited fraud investigators (PINS - Professionalism in Security). This is a nationally recognised qualification, accredited by Portsmouth University, and requires each student to successfully complete 7 separate fraud modules, with exams at the end of each module.
- 6.5 The PINS qualification ensures that all investigation staff are fully conversant with all the relevant legislation covering the collation and recording of evidence (Criminal Procedures & Investigations Act 1996); the interviewing and treatment of suspects (Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984) and

authorisation of/use of surveillance techniques (Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000).

- 6.6 In cases where the Housing Benefit and/or Council Tax Support recipient is in receipt of another Social Security benefit (for example - Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance or Employment Support Allowance) local authority investigators will join forces with colleagues from the Department for Work & Pensions' Fraud Investigation Service to conduct a joint investigation.
- 6.7 Sevenoaks District Council has an excellent working relationship with the local Fraud Investigation Service (DWP) and work hard to maintain the close links between the organisations. A majority of the benefit fraud investigations instigated by the Councils will be joint ventures with the DWP.
- 6.8 All persons suspected of submitting fraudulent benefit claims/failing to declare relevant changes in their circumstances are invited to attend a formal interview to:
- show the claimant the evidence the authority has collated which appears to show that certain offences have been committed and,
 - seek a response/explanation from the claimant to the evidence shown as well as understand any mitigating circumstances that the claimant may have had, during the period in question, which may have caused their actions/behaviour.
 - At the end of the interview the person being interviewed will be informed by the investigating officer that, where appropriate, a report will be issued to the Benefit Assessment Team to adjust any payments of benefit they may have had and depending on the size of their overpayments and the circumstances under which this overpayment arose, a panel of senior managers will decide what action, if any, the relevant local authority would take in this case.
- 6.9 All cases in which the investigation results in an overpayment of benefit or the removal of a discount will be reviewed against the Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Sanctions and Prosecution Policy to decide upon the most appropriate action to take.
- 6.10 The decision on appropriate action is not taken lightly and as such it is based upon the informed decisions of a panel of senior officers within the local authority taking all aspects of the case into account.

Housing Benefit & Council Tax Support Sanctions and Prosecution Policy**7.0 Introduction**

- 7.1 Sevenoaks District Council has a duty to protect the public purse and as part of that commitment they have a responsibility to prevent and detect fraud. This policy is designed to provide clear guidance on the measures available to both authorities on how to deal with those who are found to have committed either benefit fraud and/or Council Tax Support fraud.
- 7.2 The guidelines in this policy must be implemented in a fair and unbiased manner each investigation is unique and must be judged on its own merits, with regard to the full facts of the case before an appropriate sanction is imposed.
- 7.3 In general the Council has 4 main options for further action when an investigation concludes that there has been an overpayment of benefit or an incorrectly awarded Council Tax discount:
- a) **A Warning letter** – Letter issued by the investigating officer explaining that the Council has decided that it is not in the public interest to take any further action against them, but they should make every effort to ensure that they repay the overpaid benefit and/or their increased Council Tax liability as quickly as possible in order to prevent civil recovery action being instigated.
 - b) **Formal Caution** (benefit offences only) – The offender signs a written admission to all the alleged offences and the authority retains this statement for 5 years. The cautions are logged on a national database of all sanctions (administered by the DWP) and any future sanction action would be influenced by earlier decisions.
 - c) **Administrative Penalty** – The offender does not admit to the alleged offences in this instance, but accepts to pay an additional amount to the authority to prevent the Council from instigating legal action. Again the penalty action taken in benefit fraud cases is logged on a national database so that, where necessary, checks can be made in case that claimant is the subject of an investigation in the future.
 - d) **Prosecution** – the local authority takes the claimant to court, citing offences either under the Social Security Administration Act 1992 (for benefit fraud offences) or under the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (for Council Tax Support fraud offences), or other legislation if found appropriate.
- 7.4 Formal Cautions, Administrative Penalties and prosecution are commonly referred to as sanctions. A local authority will only issue a sanction when there is a realistic prospect of obtaining a successful prosecution. In cases where offenders are offered a caution or penalty and these sanctions are refused the local authority will review the case again and decide if legal proceedings are now appropriate.

- 7.5 In all investigations conducted by the Anti-Fraud Team evidence is obtained and collated in accordance to the Police & Criminal Evidence Act 1984 and the Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996. This means that, if deemed appropriate by senior management, cases can be referred for legal proceedings.
- 7.6 A case will only be deemed suitable for prosecution after it has been thoroughly reviewed and confirmed that it meets the requirements of the Code for Crown Prosecutors.
- 7.5 There are 2 main requirements – The Evidential Test and The Public Interest Test.

8.0 Evidential Test

- 8.1 The prosecuting authority must be satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a ‘realistic prospect of conviction’ on each charge. Consideration should be given to what the claimant’s defence may be and how it is likely to affect the prospects of conviction.
- 8.2 A realistic prospect of conviction is an objective test based solely upon the prosecuting authority’s assessment of the evidence and any information that the authority has about the defence that the suspect may put forward. The authority must then decide whether, if properly directed in accordance with law, a jury (or magistrate) is more likely to convict than acquit a defendant of the charge(s) against them.
- 8.3 When deciding if there is sufficient evidence to prosecute the authority will consider:

Can the evidence be used in court?

- Is it likely that the evidence will be excluded by the court? (For example, is it likely it may be excluded due to the way that it was obtained?)
- Is the evidence hearsay? If so, is the court likely to allow it to be represented under any of the exceptions which permit such evidence to be given in court?
- Does the evidence relate to the bad character of the suspect? If so, is the court likely to allow it to be presented?

Is the evidence reliable?

- Does the suspect have a creditable explanation for their actions?
- Is there evidence which might support or detract from the reliability of a confession? Is its reliability affected by factors such as the suspect’s level of understanding?

- Is the identification of the suspect likely to be questioned?
- Are there concerns over the accuracy, reliability or credibility of any of the evidence of any witness?
- Do any of the witnesses have previous convictions or out-of-court disposals which may affect their credibility?

9.0 Public Interest Test

9.1 When the prosecuting authority has deemed that the case has sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction it must then consider if it is in the 'public interest' for the legal action to progress. Every case is different and many will have mitigating aspects which will influence the authority's decision to either take legal action or refrain from instigating legal proceedings.

9.2 Some common public interest factors tending against prosecution:

- The offence committed can be proven to be the result of a genuine mistake or misunderstanding on the claimant's part.
- The claimant's age would deter the authority from taking further action.
- The claimant's mental or physical health would deter the authority from taking further action.
- The claimant has repaid the overpaid benefit in its entirety (balanced with the seriousness of the offence)
- It can be established that part of the overpaid benefit was due to an error in benefit administration either on the part of the local authority or the Department for Work & Pensions.
- The investigation process contains unexplained long delays.
- The consequences of the claimant receiving a criminal record may far outweigh the benefits of the authority taking the action.
- The claimant's family circumstances or adverse recent events may deter the authority from taking the person to court.

9.3 Some common public interest factors tending in favour of prosecution:

- The seriousness of the offence as reflected by the general guideline thresholds set in advance by local authority (see section 9.4).
- The claimant held a position of trust or responsibility.

- The offences are pre-planned or pre-meditated or contain an element of pre-planning or an intention to deceive the authority to obtain benefit.
- The claimant has previous convictions or sanctions related to the current offence.
- The offences are repeated or continued over a long period.
- The claimant has been offered an alternative sanction (i.e. Formal Caution or Administrative Penalty), but has refused it.

9.4 As a guideline, if the adjudicated collective overpayment/incorrectly awarded discount is above £4,000, the local authority would deem this a serious offence and the case should be considered for prosecution. In cases where the collective overpayment/incorrectly awarded discount is below £4,000 the authority may consider an alternative to prosecution, for example a Formal Caution (benefit offences only) or an Administrative Penalty. However, senior management may decide that legal proceedings are still appropriate due to the circumstances in which the overpayment occurred.

10.0 Formal Cautions and Administrative Penalties

10.1 The Council may consider offering a Formal Caution in relation to a benefit offence following the review of the evidence and public interest criteria and a decision has been made that it is not in the public interest to proceed to legal action. The case should fulfil the following criteria:

- The makes an admission of the offence
- In joint investigations the DWP have decided it is appropriate to issue a Formal Caution
- The claimant has not been issued with a Formal Caution or Administrative Penalty in the last 5 years
- The caution is deemed to be an appropriate deterrent to prevent this happening again in the future

10.2 In cases where the offender does not admit the offence put before them the Council may offer them an Administrative Penalty as an alternative to prosecution. The level of the penalty would be as follows:

- Benefit offences committed before 8.5.2012 the penalty imposed would be 30% of the net adjudicated overpayment.
- Benefit offences committed wholly on or after 8.5.2012 the penalty imposed would be 50% of the net adjudicated overpayment, with a minimum of £350 up to a maximum of £2,000.
- Council Tax Support offences the penalty imposed would be 50% of the excess reduction of Council Tax liability, with a minimum of £100 up to a maximum of £1000.

11.0 Publicity

- 11.1 The Council has a statutory responsibility to prevent the waste, theft and fraud of public money. To this end, the Council has put in place a range of measures to ensure that benefits are paid only to those persons who are entitled to them.
- 11.2 These measures include actions that are taken after detection of an offence, as well as measures to prevent and deter the commission of an offence.
- 11.3 One such measure is publication of convictions. The publicity generated by a conviction for benefit fraud acts as a deterrent to others seeking to claim benefit to which they are not entitled. It also reassures the general public that the Council takes a serious view of fraud and actively seeks to protect public funds.
- 11.4 The Council will therefore consider publicising successful convictions of fraud (subject to obtaining prior advice from the relevant legal services section), together with specific details of the offence(s) in question. In reaching a decision as to whether to publish such information, the Council will consider the following factors:
- The specific details of the offence committed.
 - The public interest in disclosing personal information e.g. the deterrent effect of the publication.
 - Whether the publication would be proportionate.
 - The personal circumstances of the offender.
 - Whether any other persons may be affected by the publication e.g. family members.
- 11.5 This list is not exhaustive and other factors may be relevant in the circumstances of an individual case.
- 11.6 When it is considered appropriate to publish details relating to a conviction, the reasons for such publication will be recorded by the Anti-Fraud Team.
- 11.7 Any press release on the Council's website will normally be removed after a period of 1 month.

OTFORD PALACE TOWER

Cabinet – 16 July 2015

Report of Chief Officer Corporate Support

Status: For Decision

Also considered by: Council – 21 July 2015

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report outlines the immediate requirement to maintain the structural stability of the Otford Palace Tower and requests that the works are authorised with the appropriate budget totalling £130,699 to be allocated from the General Fund Reserve.

As a separate piece of work, options regarding the future use of the building, including funding available to support any proposal, are being looked at and will be reported back to Members at a future date.

Portfolio Holder Cllr. Searles

Contact Officer(s) Facilities Manager - Emma Vincent Ext. 7304

Recommendation to Cabinet:

To recommend to Council the allocation of £130,699 from the General Fund Reserve for the completion of essential stabilisation works at the Otford Palace Tower.

Recommendation to Council:

That Council approve the allocation of £130,699 from the General Fund Reserve for the completion of essential stabilisation works at the Otford Palace Tower.

Reason for recommendation: Under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 Sevenoaks District Council have a responsibility to ensure any scheduled monuments in its ownership are structurally maintained.

Introduction and Background

- 1 The Otford Palace Tower is located by the Otford Pond and St Bartholomew's Church in Otford. A plan of the site and the surrounding area is included at appendix a. It consists of the remains of a tower, a gatehouse and other ruins at a site on Bubblestone Road. The actual date of its build is not confirmed but it has been suggested that it could date back to the Saxon era, however it was rebuilt in 1515 and intended for the use of the Archbishops of Canterbury. King Henry VIII

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seized it for himself in 1537 and used it to house his servants whilst he used Knole House as accommodation when he visited Sevenoaks.

- 2 The District Council has been in possession of the Otford Palace Tower since 5 June 1935 (then the Sevenoaks Rural District Council). The tower has been listed as a scheduled monument since 5 December 1928.
- 3 This monument is scheduled under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 as it appears to the Secretary of State to be of national importance.
- 4 Only some 150 bishops' palaces have been identified and documentary sources confirm that they were widely dispersed throughout England. All positively identified examples are considered to be nationally important.
- 5 The structure had been maintained since acquisition including removal of vegetation and structural repairs to the gatehouse. The flat roof was installed on the tower in the late 1970s. More recently, guttering works commenced in 2003 at the tower and tree removal/fence replacement commenced in 2008 at the Bubblestone Road site. Due to financial constraints, works such as repairing the pigeon netting have not been completed, and the exercise of gaining consent for works from English Heritage (now needing to be obtained from Historic England) under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 means maintenance has been delayed. During this time, the structure has deteriorated further.

Work carried out in 2014/15

- 6 In recognition of this deterioration, in January 2015 a condition survey was conducted by Thomas Ford and Partners (Chartered Architects and Surveyors) to ascertain the condition of the building structure. A report has been produced by them outlining essential works that should be completed to improve the integrity of the structure, such as fixing the flat roof which has fallen in on one corner, allowing rain water and pigeons into the building, causing further damage. This report is included for information at appendix b. Thomas Ford and Partners have subsequently completed a tender process on behalf of the Council and have gained consent from Historic England for the necessary works. Four tenders have been returned ranging from £116,667 to £148,088. Thomas Ford and Partners have evaluated the responses to the tender and advise that the bid from Pierra Restoration Ltd at £116,667 is an effective option offering the greatest value for money. Advice from the company suggests that works will take 4-8 weeks to complete.
- 7 Alternative sources of funding have been investigated but none are available to assist the currently required works to be carried out.
- 8 The option of delaying the works further is not considered appropriate as the likelihood is the structure will deteriorate further.

Planning feedback on Enabling Development

- 9 Advice from the Development Management team has been sought relating to the possibility of enabling development to offset the current and ongoing costs of works relating to the areas highlighted on the plan in appendix a.
- 10 This advice states that there are a number of designations/considerations that apply to this site. These are:
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
 - Allocated Open Space
 - Conservation Area
 - Setting of listed buildings
- 11 Taking the first of these constraints, development within the site of a Scheduled Ancient Monument would require planning permission, administered by the District Council as the Local Planning Authority and Scheduled Ancient Monument consent which is managed and determined by Historic England. Initial feedback has been sought from Historic England and it is highly unlikely that a development proposal would be supported by them.
- 12 The other constraints present their own challenges. Even if the Historic England concerns could be overcome, policies from a National through to a Local level are not supportive of development on this site.

Possible future options

- 13 It is acknowledged that a separate and more detailed piece of work is required to look at a sustainable future use for the building. This will be undertaken and reported back to Members as appropriate.
- 14 As part of this work, the Communities and Business team are researching possible sources of future funding for the tower. It is clear however that any monies that may be achievable are based on the future preservation of the structure once this initial maintenance is complete.
- 15 Initial legal advice has been sought regarding the future transfer of the site once these stabilisation works have been completed. This initial advice suggests it may be possible to transfer the ownership of the site as part of any future use, however further clarification is to be sought as part of the wider work in investigating future options for the site.
- 16 The essential works outlined in this report are therefore a minimum requirement and pre-requisite to any future use.

Key Implications

Financial

- 7 The tender process indicated Pierra Restoration Ltd as the preferred applicant at £116,667 to complete the works. A further £14,032 is required for allocation of bat liaison, architects, Principal Designer and Archaeologist. A total sum of £130,699 is therefore requested for the stabilisation works at the Otford Palace

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Tower. These works are those referenced in sections 6.1 and 6.3 of the report at Appendix B and exclude the items in sections 6.2 and 6.4.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

- 8 Under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, Sevenoaks District Council has a responsibility to continue maintaining any scheduled monuments in their possession.

Equality Assessment

- 9 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Community Impact and Outcomes

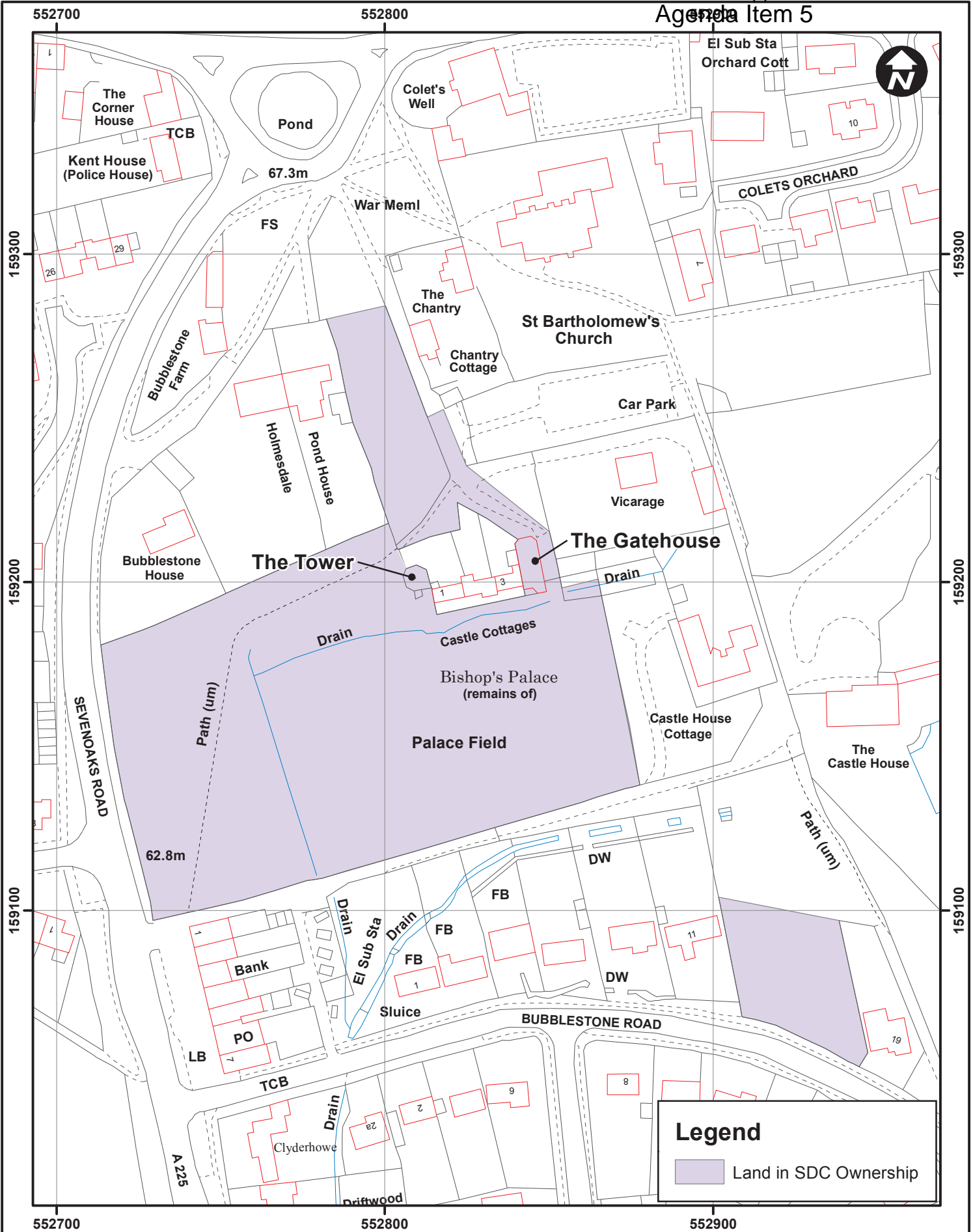
- 10 The community have shown a high level of interest in the Otford Palace Tower for a number of years. It is seen as a tourist attraction that potentially brings trade to the area. It is also of historic interest due to it being used by Henry VIII, therefore linking Otford to Knole House and Hever Castle. Members of the Otford Historical Society along with local Ward members of the District Council have been liaising with the Council throughout this process.

Conclusions

- 11 For the works to be completed a sum of £130,699 is required. This will stabilise the fabric of the Otford Palace Tower. Future use of the building and any subsequent works required will be looked at separately with Members and in conjunction with the community.

Background Papers: None

Jim Carrington-West
Chief Officer for Corporate Support



Legend

Land in SDC Ownership

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THOMAS
FORD
& PARTNERS
CHARTERED
ARCHITECTS
SURVEYORS

INSPECTION



ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE, OTFORD

January 2015
867501

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Archbishop's Palace, Otford : Inspection 2015

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1. Introduction

The Report

- 1.1 This is a summary report **only** and is not a specification for the execution of the recommended work and must not be used as such.
- 1.2 The Inspecting Architect is willing to advise on the recommendations arising from the survey, to draw up a specification for **dealing with them**, invite competitive tenders and inspect the work during progress and on completion.
- 1.3 It is recommended that the Inspecting Architect be involved in any substantial work. It is appreciated that funds are often limited, however it is our experience that repairs carried out solely by a builder can sometimes be **ineffective** and may in the long term prove **uneconomic**.

The Limitations of the Report

- 1.4 This report is based on the findings of an inspection from **the ground** or other places which can be easily and safely reached, using any ladder provided.
- 1.5 We have not inspected **woodwork** or other parts of **the structure** which are covered, unexposed or inaccessible and we are **therefore unable to report that any** such part of the property is free from defects.

2. Generally

Location

- 2.1 **Oxford Palace** lies to the south of the **Parish Church** of St Bartholomew, close to the intersection of the High Street and the A225.

Orientation

- 2.2 The points of the compass are used as reference.

Jurisdiction

- 2.3 The Palace is owned by Sevenoaks District Council and is a **Scheduled Ancient Monument**.

Accommodation

- 2.4 The Palace fragment consists of the **outer courtyard**, **North-West Tower** and a fragment of the main gatehouse.

Construction and Development

- 2.5 The Palace was the conversion of a **manor house** by Archbishop Warham and was **in use** by 1518. The outer courtyard was 238 feet wide but only the **North-West Tower** and fragments of the north wall of the courtyard and gatehouse survive.

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Architect/Date of Inspection/Weather

- 2.6 The inspection was undertaken in January 2015 over two days. The weather was cold (1° to 2°) on both days but it was dry.

Previous Inspections

- 2.7 There have been no previous inspection.

Areas Not Inspected

- 2.8 Any areas not inspected are listed in the body of the text.

3. Tower Interior

Generally

- 3.1 Entry into the interior of the Tower is via a doorway on the south side of the Tower which was originally internal to the Palace and gives access to the ground floor area. There are no internal floors within the Tower and an internal scaffold was erected over the Christmas period of 2014 to allow an inspection and emergency repair.
- 3.2 The inspection will be made on a lift by lift basis using the points of the compass for reference. For those reading the inspection on site, easy reference can be made to the adjacent Parish Church of St Bartholomew and the south wall faces you.

GROUND FLOOR

- 3.3 The ground floor area of the Tower has an earthen floor covered in rubble. At this stage it is not known if the earth covering masks the remains of an original floor surface. The base of the Tower is not quite octagonal and the inspection will look at each facet with description and repair needs noted as necessary.
- 3.4 The adjacent staircase structure to the south-east and the probable garderobe tower to the south will be dealt with as separate structures.

South Wall

- 3.5 The south wall contains the entrance doorway into the space. The walls are constructed of 16th century red brickwork with possible remains of render just about surviving at low level, but this could be a later repair. The doorway is outlined with Reigate stone dressings with a timber lintel which will be inspected from above. The doorway is late mediaeval 16th century in style in Reigate stone and contains a modern iron gate for security.
- 3.6 Entry into the garderobe is via a second doorway with a concrete lintel above.
- 3.7 The doorway lintel suffers from water penetration from above and there are also worm and other infestations. It would be prudent to assume that this lintel may need to be replaced as part of the emergency repairs. It consists of two sections of oak.

- 3.8 The external stonework of the doorway is heavily weathered and some inappropriate sand and cement repairs have been carried out at the base. This stonework will need some careful conservation in the longer term to ensure it does not deteriorate any further, the sand and cement repairs removed and replaced with more appropriate materials and the insertion of a more appropriate gate and door. However, these are not emergency structural repairs.
- 3.9 The internal jamb stones on the right hand side are in good condition but those to the left are suffering and have lost surface. They are thought to be stable at present but a decision will need to be made whether further intervention will be required for conservation purposes.
- 3.10 The iron fixings for the gate are splitting the stonework at the upper level. The iron bar at high level across the opening to prevent access will have to be removed. Some repointing will be necessary in the brick reveals in the longer term and the hard cement renders will also need to be removed.
- 3.11 The main expanse of walling is in reasonable condition, although there is some weathering to bricks and some pockets and holes which will have to be carefully conserved or replaced in the longer term. However, for emergency purposes, no significant work is required. Careful repointing will be required in the future as it has been heavily repointed in inappropriate materials, probably sand and cement.
- 3.12 There will be longer term need from a conservation point of view to carry out some brick repairs holding the concrete lintel up in the doorway opening to the garderobe but it is generally in reasonable condition, although very weathered. It has been robbed out at the bottom and a decision should be taken on whether this should be left or reinstated for aesthetic reasons in the longer term.

South-West Elevation

- 3.13 This facet is also constructed of brickwork with the bottom half of a window with Reigate stone jambs with a brick reveal and brick cill. The window has been blocked with modern iron grilles and significant amounts of hard cementitious pointing has been carried out in the past.
- 3.14 The brickwork is in reasonable condition, although a little weathered. The hard cementitious pointing should be removed in the longer term.
- 3.15 There are some large cement based repairs to at least two of the quoins and these should be removed. All quoins have evidence of a degree of salt action and salts and at least two are cracked but they are probably still stable. Conservation and repair is required but it is not likely to collapse in the near future. The grille needs replacement urgently for anti-pigeon protection.

West Elevation

- 3.16 The west elevation is slightly wider than its companion on the south-west and it also constructed of red brickwork with a brick cill and there is a wider two-light window in the opening with Reigate stone jambs.

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- 3.17 It is clear that brickwork below the window has been rebuilt at some time, probably as an emergency repair. There is evidence of heavy areas of sand and cement repair in the brick reveals and the jamb stones and this should be removed in the longer term for conservation purposes. All the jambs are weathered but they are probably still structurally sound. Conservation and repair is thought to be the best way forward, although a small amount of work on the brick reveals would be beneficial and, in the longer term, once the hard cement render has been removed it must be assumed that either brick repairs or rendering will have to be undertaken.
- 3.18 The window is heavily sand and cement repaired, which is causing problems. The cill is badly weathered but is probably structurally sound but not capable of being carefully weathered with new windows. If the aim is to bring the lower back into use, an imaginative system of conservation repair and then glazing will have to be devised.

North-West Elevation

- 3.19 This elevation is in 16th century brickwork but contains an original fireplace with all the surviving jamb stones and head stones with carefully carved spandrels. This space contains a large amount of rubble.
- 3.20 The overall impression is that there have been some hard sand and cement repairs carried out to brickwork, which need to come off. The brickwork is fairly thin above the fireplace opening and some minor repair and longer term conservation will be needed with possibly the replacement of two or three bricks. The hard cementitious pointing is not helping.
- 3.21 The chimney flue survives intact full height but it is difficult to inspect this. It appears to be rendered internally and there is soot on it. It is in remarkably good condition but some areas of careful repointing will be required in the longer term. Bricks have been robbed out on the left side and it is suspected there might have been a small niche or alcove for the storage of important items or for carefully heating items. This could be tidied up in the longer term but this is not required for structural reasons.

North Elevation

- 3.22 The north elevation is the bottom part of a two-light window with surrounding brickwork and Reigate stone jambs. The brickwork below and including window cill level was significantly rebuilt in the 20th century. The jambs have been heavily sand and cement repaired, both completely across the stonework and on the edges. It is likely that this will have to be removed for the longer term conservation of the building and the ability for the building to breathe but will almost certainly require quite extensive longer term conservation. This also extends to the jambs generally which have been sand and cement pointed at high level around brickwork, which is disappointing.
- 3.23 Modern bars have been inserted into the window and the cill is significantly weathered, as are the jambs and it has a modern concrete mullion. There are occasional surviving remains of sockets for external ferramenta in the jambs. This is probably structurally sound from an internal point of view but it is difficult to see how the building could be weathered in the longer term.

North-East Elevation

- 3.24 The north-east elevation is similar to the north elevation. There are significant areas of replacement 20th century brickwork below window cill level. The Reigate stone jambs are heavily weathered, sand and cement repaired and with bricks inserted and they will need some careful conservation if they are to be stabilised in the longer term and the inappropriate materials will need to be removed. At present, it all appears structurally sound.
- 3.25 The cill and mullion of the two-light window are concrete, the jamb stones are original but heavily weathered. From the interior, these appear to be structurally sound but it is difficult to visualise how these would be weathered if the building was brought back into use. The modern internal grilles are built into the stonework.

East Elevation

- 3.26 The east elevation is from the previous elevation up to the entrance door and is also constructed of original brickwork, including the panel beneath the cill. It has a two-light window with Reigate jambs on the right hand side but the left hand side has been rebuilt in modern brickwork, probably in the 20th century. The two-light window is in Reigate stone, the central mullion is a concrete replacement but the remainder appears to be original with modern bars internally.
- 3.27 The brickwork is in reasonable condition, although there are areas where careful conservation and removal of hard pointing and perhaps some piecing-in is required. However, none of this is required in the short term for the structural stability of the building. The jamb stones have been heavily repaired with sand and cement and it is likely that one will have to be replaced and all the inappropriate materials will have to be removed.
- 3.28 The jambs of the window opening are heavily weathered but they appear to be structurally sound. The cill is badly weathered and that might need some piecing-in if it is to remain structurally sound for the longer term.

FIRST SCAFFOLD LIFT

South Elevation

- 3.29 The south elevation is primarily original brickwork with surviving recesses for the floor structure above, as well as a slot that was presumably for a ceiling board to go into the wall. The opening into the garderobe has a modern concrete lintel and the opening to the doorway at ground floor level has a timber lintel which is likely to be a reused timber as it has mortices within it. A plastic downpipe from the roof at high level passes around the doorway. There is also an opening for a doorway into this first floor room from a walkway to the south.
- 3.30 Despite the lack of timbers in the pockets for the floor structure, there is very little evidence of structural collapse or significant problems. No immediately work is needed for structural reasons but longer term issues about presentation and aesthetics will need to be discussed. It is very interesting to see historic plaster surviving where the ceiling boards went in and these are of historic importance and should not be removed.
- 3.31 There are some isolated loose bricks on top of the offset for the ceiling are loose and it would be beneficial to bed these to ensure they are not lost.

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- 3.32 There is a great deal of disturbed brickwork in the entrance from the southern walkway at first floor level and it is collapsing and bricks are fracturing below due to water retention and freezing. The jamb is in a similar condition and there is a large tree, possibly Elder, growing out the side and it is suspected that the downpipe is also leaking.
- 3.33 Significant work is required as a matter of urgency for structural reasons in this corner to consolidate but a longer term decision on rebuilding will have to be taken when the funding bid goes in.
- 3.34 The timber lintel to the doorway below is at the point of collapse and should be urgently replaced with simple concrete lintels at this stage to give structural stability.
- 3.35 The brickwork has been previously patch repaired, particularly around the concrete lintel. There are bands of weathered brickwork but these do not need to be replaced for structural reasons at present and the presentation of the Tower in the longer term will determine whether they should be repaired or just left as part of the story.

South-West Elevation

- 3.36 This elevation is also in brickwork and contains the head of the window which is a concrete lintel. The offset for the floor survives at first floor level but there has been significant patching in with modern brickwork. The bottom of the opening into the first floor garderobe space is also visible from this elevation.
- 3.37 The modern building in of brickwork is hollow with a very large void behind. It is suspected this will have to be rebuilt and the void packed properly for structural reasons to ensure this corner remains stable.
- 3.38 The concrete lintel to the window appears to be in reasonable condition as does the stonework in the head of the window. There might also be some surviving render, which is of interest. All works in the window reveal will be longer term conservation works rather than structural work.
- 3.39 There is loose brickwork in the robbed out doorway into the garderobe but it is not structural and therefore could be part of the more significant bid in due course.

West Elevation

- 3.40 This elevation is brickwork with timber lintels to the two-light window opening. There are major areas of cementitious render on the right hand side within the window reveals around the jamb stones and heavy sand and cement pointing around the jamb stones and brickwork on the left hand reveal. Most of the brickwork above the lintel has been rebuilt, probably in the 20th century, to give structural stability. The window heads are original.
- 3.41 There is a major void in the wall at the junction of this elevation and the south-west elevation. This is presumed to be for a principal timber for the floor. All the modern brickwork is hollow and clearly the void behind was never properly packed and repaired.
- 3.42 Concern is expressed that there is movement as the timber bressumer is moving, the left hand side is rotten with very little bearing left. The replacement of this lintel or providing secondary support is required as an emergency measure for structural reasons. It would also be worth removing some of the brickwork above to see the condition of the void behind and to allow for structural packing. This will mean that the brickwork above will act as a beam rather than put pressure on the timber bressumer below.

- 3.43 Significant conservation will be needed of the Reigate stone jambs and the hard cementitious pointing should be removed as a matter of urgency to allow them to breathe.
- 3.44 The window stonework at the window head appears to be in a stable condition but has been heavily sand and cement repaired and therefore does not need to be interfered with at this stage.

North-West Elevation

- 3.45 This is the elevation above the fireplace at ground floor level and the top of the brick relieving arch can be seen. The elevation is constructed of the original brickwork, with modern brickwork at the scar of the former first floor timber structure and this goes up to the first floor fireplace, which will be inspected from the level above this.
- 3.46 There are remains of render on this elevation but they do not appear to be of any great age but go over the historic brickwork and discussions will need to be held to decide if they are of significance.
- 3.47 The modern brickwork repairs are hollow when banged. It is suspected that the voids behind were never properly packed and grouted but it does not appear from this level to be under any particular distress. It is therefore best left alone at present and its longer term conservation and repair form part of a proper bid in due course.
- 3.48 The inspecting architect spent some time trying to work out the original floor structure. It is thought that there were principal timbers, at least one running from the joint of the south-west and west elevation through to a corresponding joint on the other side and possibly another adjacent, with all the other floor joists going in at an angle, hence the unusual orientation of the slots for the timber beams. This is an exciting floor structure and if the floor is to be reinserted, this pattern should be followed.

North Elevation

- 3.49 The lintel above the two-light window has been replaced with modern concrete, all the historic brickwork has been heavily over-pointed with sand and cement, there is a patch of modern pointing where the floor would have been and floor joist holes have also been bricked up.
- 3.50 The modern brickwork sounds hollow but there is no evidence of distress in it, so it should be left alone at present. Longer term conservation plans can be dealt with at a later date.
- 3.51 The concrete lintel above the window appears secure. The window heads are heavily sand and cement repaired but are stable. The amount of sand and cement renders and pointing on the window reveals are unfortunate and it would be good to remove that now to allow the building to breathe. The modern metal grilles are probably not causing undue damage to the window reveals at present.

North-East Elevation

- 3.52 The north-east elevation consists of a two-light window with timber lintels or bressumers above surrounded by original brickwork. The scars for the pockets for the roof structure above are still visible but were bricked in in the 20th century. The window reveals are in Reigate stone but heavily sand and cement repaired. A great deal of make-up has also been inserted using a modern cementitious material.

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- 3.53 The blockings to the floor structure reveal voids behind as they were never fully packed. This is not a structural problem at present but discussions will be needed on the longer term proposals.
- 3.54 There is a bow on the timber bressumer and there is some loss of bearing on the left hand side and a large sand and cement repair was removed. This is probably stable and could be propped as a temporary measure, rather than replaced at this stage. Some of the original brickwork above is loose and some work is therefore required as a temporary measure.
- 3.55 Concern is expressed about the condition of the original jambs around this window and all the cementitious material must be removed urgently to allow them to breathe and a proper assessment should be made on the extent of the repair necessary, either as an emergency measure or in the longer term. This window reveal is in the worst condition.
- 3.56 All the heads of the two-light window have been heavily sand and cement repaired but they appear stable. Long term conservation issues will need to be discussed

East Elevation

- 3.57 The east elevation also has a two-light window but this contains a modern concrete bressumer. The reveals have been discussed separately and the window heads are all heavily sand and cement repaired.
- 3.58 Most of the brickwork above is a modern insertion over the scars of the former floor. To the right there is an expanse of original brickwork leading into the doorway at first floor level on the south side, with an area of rebuilt brickwork from the 20th century.
- 3.59 This area of 20th century brickwork is in imminent danger of collapse and water is cascading into the void behind from the failed roof at high level. The surrounding surviving original brickwork is in imminent danger of loss. Large tree roots are growing through this space and urgent work is required immediately if we are to avoid losing significant fabric. The wall below has been so saturated that it is likely that when it dries out significant faces of bricks will also be lost and allowance should be made for repair.
- 3.60 The brickwork above the modern lintel is completely hollow. Buried within the brickwork are the remains of what is thought to have been the ceiling boards. These are rotten but are of historic interest. Packing behind the voids will be required in the longer term but this is not needed at this stage.
- 3.61 The hard cementitious material should be removed from the voids to allow them to breathe. There is significant loss of surface on the jamb stones on the right hand side of the window due to the water cascading from first floor level. Once these dry out, significant areas are likely to be lost in the longer term.

SECOND SCAFFOLD LIFT

South Elevation

- 3.62 The south elevation is in original brickwork with the remains of base coats of render the timber bands inserted in the wall are presumed to be for panelling but it is not known if it was originally rendered and the panelling was provided later or the panelling removed and then it was rendered.

- 3.63 The first floor opening to the left side of the wall has Reigate stone jambs and head and would have led to the south and the south range of buildings. To the right is a good quality Reigate stone archway leading into the garderobe.
- 3.64 The doorway leading into the southern range has suffered from significant water penetration, freeze/thaw action and other problems. The right hand jambs are disintegrating completely and will not survive much longer, nor will the external brickwork which will be discussed externally. This archway now needs to be braced as a matter of urgency with centring, including the heads and the left hand jambs, to ensure it does not collapse and a decision taken to see if it can be saved or if it needs to be replaced. Unfortunately, it is likely that most of the stonework will need to be replaced but, whatever happens, it needs urgent structural support.
- 3.65 The voids above the archway need to be pointed and grouted to ensure it does not collapse.
- 3.66 The timber battens in the main expanse of walling are rotten but they are not affecting the structural stability of the building and could therefore be left at this stage and properly archaeologically recorded before a decision about their removal is taken. The wall does not need any urgent repair at present.
- 3.67 The archway into the garderobe has also suffered from saturation and salt action but it is structurally stable at present. However, it would probably be worth putting some centring in it to ensure it remains stable. There are voids surrounding it on all sides and it has a timber bressumer on the other side with a void above so some immediate packing of that would be needed for structural reasons.
- 3.68 The adjacent jambs have the remains of possible renders and they should not be removed at this stage. One of the stones above is disintegrating, although is probably secure at present, but it should be observed regularly for changes.

South-West Elevation

- 3.69 This is a short elevation in brickwork with a single light window with stone and brick jambs and holes that were presumably originally for the fixing of panelling.
- 3.70 The anti-bird mesh has been lost and needs to be replaced as a matter of urgency to prevent birds entering the interior. The cill is concrete and this is not helping the saturation and ideally this should be removed and replaced with lime to allow the structure beneath to breathe. The modern brickwork below is saturated and moving.
- 3.71 The rest of the brickwork is in reasonable condition and the jamb stones, whilst weathered, appear structurally sound, although discussions need to be held in the longer term about one of them.
- 3.72 The stonework to the window is in reasonable condition. It is weathered and the cill is also weathered but there are techniques to ensure its preservation. This comment does not include the exterior. The concrete above will be discussed on the next lift.

West Elevation

- 3.73 This is a brickwork elevation with a two-light window with Reigate stone jambs to the reveals. The window has a modern stone mullion, original surrounding stonework that is heavily sand and cement repaired and a concrete lintel above.

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3.74 Slots are visible in the brickwork and these are presumed to be for battens for fixing the internal panelling. One can see the voids behind the modern brickwork in the lift below. There is significant weathering through the surviving jamb stones and hard cement repairs have not helped this position. It is probably stable but conservation and/or repair or replacement will be required depending on the extent of the interpretation of the Tower in the longer term.

3.75 The anti-bird mesh should be replaced with something more secure. The hard cementitious repairs should be removed to allow the building to breathe. The window appears structurally sound at present but will need longer term conservation.

North-West Elevation

3.76 This elevation is in brickwork with battens that are presumed to be for panelling and contains the most complete original fireplace with head stones with carved spandrels. There are a number of large holes drilled in these, presumably for the fixing of something on the exterior at some time. The fire back is virtually complete, with wonderful quality brickwork but the fire hearth has been almost completely robbed out.

3.77 The chimney flue is completely rendered and in beautiful condition.

3.78 The immediate conservation needs of this section of the building are relatively minor and it probably should be left alone at present. In the longer term, the replacement of the bricks in the fire back should be considered and also the cill if it is to be brought back into use.

North Elevation

3.79 The north elevation follows a similar pattern and there are recesses for battens for panelling that have almost all been removed. The north facing two-light window has been bricked up at some time and the reveal and jamb stones are therefore in better condition, although the inappropriate materials have not helped. However, everything appears structurally sound at present.

3.80 This elevation does not need any immediate structural repairs but some conservation and repair will be required in the longer term if the room is to be brought back into use.

North-East Elevation

3.81 The north-east elevation is also in original brickwork and contains a two-light window. The central mullion of the window has been replaced with modern stonework but the rest of the surrounding masonry is original Reigate, although very heavily sand and cement repaired with sand and cement pointing in some of the brickwork. The window cill is concrete and there have been patch repairs to the brickwork below the window. Scars also survive for the timber battens on this elevation.

3.82 The inappropriate materials need to be removed from this window as a matter of urgency to give it a chance to breathe. The surrounding stonework is probably secure at present but an allowance should be made for some mortar repairs. The concrete cill should be replaced with a lime as a temporary measure to allow it to breathe.

3.83 There are voids in the brickwork below and some urgent minor pointing to lighten things up would be beneficial and it can then be left alone. Because the recesses of the battens are fairly deep on this elevation, going beyond the brickwork, it might be also prudent to tile pack these as structural repairs.

East Elevation

- 3.84 The east elevation is also in original brickwork with a two-light window with Reigate stone jambs. The window has extensive surviving original material but the central mullion is a modern replacement.
- 3.85 The remains of the battens are rotting and it might be prudent to put some tile packing into these recesses as an emergency item to ensure the inner faces of brickwork do not become unstable. Comments about the saturation of the brickwork in the southern corner are repeated here and it will suffer once it starts to dry out and more extensive repairs might be required in the longer term.
- 3.86 The anti-bird mesh has been completely lost and birds are entering. This needs replacement as a matter of urgency. This applies to all the window openings on this floor.
- 3.87 All the jamb stones are heavily weathered and the inappropriate materials need to be removed to allow the windows to breathe. The window cill is shattering and, unfortunately, will probably need replacement in the longer term. This will be considered from the outside. The internal concrete cill could be removed to allow the building to breathe. Some tile packing around a couple of the jamb stones would be prudent for structural reasons.

THIRD SCAFFOLD LIFT

South Elevation

- 3.88 The south elevation is in original brickwork with recesses for lost panel battens. There are the remains of renders at low level and the recess for the next floor structure is approximately at eye height with pockets for the main floor joists. A modern plastic downpipe runs down the elevation near the opening into the stair turret on the south-east corner.
- 3.89 There is a large opening into the stair turret but most of the detail has been previously robbed out and there is a further opening on the right side of the elevation into the garderobe but the bottom half of this has been robbed out at some time. This second opening has Reigate stone dressings.
- 3.90 The south-east corner is in serious distress because of the extent of water penetration from the roof above. The brickwork is very saturated and is collapsing in areas and major areas of historic fabric are being lost, as are areas around the opening. Urgent emergency stabilisation and, probably, rebuilding will unfortunately be necessary in order to save this corner and all the brickwork below. The extensive plant growth indicates that this has been going on for a very long time.
- 3.91 The rest of the brickwork is in reasonable condition but there are bricks, particularly around the pockets for the floor joists, which will need to be rebedded urgently to avoid their loss. Bricks need rebedding in the opening into the garderobe. The jambs are generally in acceptable condition but there are major voids behind the right hand jamb and the brickwork on which it stands (which is technically on the south-western elevation) is modern and not attached to anything and is in danger of collapse in the longer term. That will need to be rebuilt to support the masonry above.
- 3.92 Also in this corner is a lovely arched niche to make up the odd angle in the building.

South-West Elevation

- 3.93 This is, essentially a blank elevation with a concrete lintel for the window below. Significant rebuilding was undertaken in the 20th century using brickwork, presumably in pockets and, unfortunately, the majority of this brickwork does not appear to be bonded into anything and is bowing and has moved out. There is an urgent need for significant rebuilding of this brickwork and packing in behind.

West Elevation

- 3.94 The lintel to the window below is concrete. The brickwork above is mainly original but modern brickwork has been inserted into the pockets for the floor structure but unfortunately this does not bond into anything and there are large voids behind. All this brickwork is loose and about to fall out and will need to be rebuilt and the pockets behind properly packed for structural reasons.

North-West Elevation

- 3.95 This elevation is in original brickwork with similar battens inserted. Originally there was a fireplace just above head height on this scaffold lift. The brickwork below was rebuilt in the 20th century but it is covered by a large pile of guano. The corner jambs have all been robbed out and the stonework was removed at some point when the building was abandoned but the side jambs do not appear to be unstable at present. A small amount of work should be allowed to ensure it is secure. When viewed from this level, the modern brickwork appears to be secure but it is suspected there are voids behind.

North Elevation

- 3.96 The north elevation contains the timber lintel or bressumer above the window below, again constructed of brickwork with major patching in around the scar for the floor. Above this there are recesses for the panelling battens.
- 3.97 Although the timber bressumer or lintel is rotting slightly, it appears stable at present. There are significant voids in the patch repaired area of the wall above. All the modern brickwork is hollow and only serving to block the hole. Some allowance should be made for structural works to ensure it remains secure until the longer term future of the Tower is agreed.
- 3.98 Some packing of the recesses for the lost battens should also be allowed as the brickwork is being undermined.

North-East Elevation

- 3.99 This elevation is in original brickwork with repairs in the area of the former floor structure. The lintel to the window below is concrete. This facet is in reasonable condition and the modern brickwork appears secure, although there are voids behind. Very little needs to be done to this facet in the short term but discussions will have to be held in the longer term about the display of the walls.

East Elevation

- 3.100 The east elevation is the band of brickwork between the window in the lift below with the concrete lintel above, and the window in the lift above. The floor scar has been completely rebuilt in modern brickwork and most of the elevation, certainly between the window and the corner, is completely saturated by water penetration from the roof above. The roof is still glistening and it has not rained for some time. All the modern brickwork is loose and coming out. Major stabilisation is required to avoid losing further material including the removal of the remains of battens and supporting brickwork where battens have been lost.

TOP LIFT

South Elevation

- 3.101 The south elevation was viewed from some way across the room due to severe concern about the roof structure above. The south elevation is in original brickwork with the scars for battens. Wall timbers at high level are to support the roof structure. Entrance into the garderobe on the right hand side is through a good quality Reigate stone window, the jambs of which are unfortunately very badly cubed and it is unlikely they will survive in the longer term. It would be worth allowing for centring to go into this arch to support it in the medium term. The large voids above this opening will need to be pointed and grouted if it is to survive. Of course, this is not helped by the significant water penetration from the roof above.
- 3.102 Unfortunately, this elevation will need some packing to stabilise brickwork where material has been lost, particularly around the holes for the battens. Great concern is expressed about the entrance to the staircase on the south-east corner.
- 3.103 There is catastrophic water penetration from the roof above and the roof structure is collapsing (to be discussed separately), brickwork is collapsing and the modern concrete lintel to the opening is secure but the brickwork below is coming out. Major urgent work is required to avoid the collapse of this corner of the building.

South-West Elevation

- 3.104 This also has a single light window but this has been blocked up, all the jamb stones have been sand and cement repaired, it has a modern concrete lintel and modern brickwork at the top of the elevation where it joins the roof structure.
- 3.105 Water penetration is visible around the roof in a couple of locations. The roof will be discussed separately. The brickwork above the opening into the garderobe is clearly under great distress with loose brickwork and water penetration above. Conservation and stabilisation is required to avoid the loss of material. The adjacent jamb stones are badly fractured and one is obviously not going to survive. It would be worth replacing this now with a tile repair as a temporary measure to support the surviving jamb above, removal of the hard cementitious repair below and a similar approach taken with that jamb stone.
- 3.106 The blocking to the window clearly suffers from some water penetration but some repointing is probably all that is required at present.

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West Elevation

- 3.107 The two-light window has been blocked with brickwork salvaged from the building. The jamb stones have been sand and cement repaired and some replaced with brickwork. Unfortunately, the sand and cement repairs on the right hand side have all collapsed and the jamb behind is now in very poor condition. This should now be repaired with a tile repair to support the masonry above. The concrete lintel above the window is secure. The surviving stonework on the window has been heavily sand and cement repaired, particularly the mullion, and it is likely that this will have to be replaced in the longer term. The rest of the fabric is probably secure at present but suffering from water penetration from above, which will be discussed as part of the roof inspection.

North-West Elevation

- 3.108 This elevation has the relieving arch for a former fireplace. The brickwork is essentially original with the recesses for panelling battens. Some areas of brickwork have been lost and this brickwork will need some careful stabilisation to avoid the loss of further material in the longer term. The top of the wall was complexly rebuilt with modern brickwork in the 20th century and timbers to support the roof structure above.
- 3.109 A couple of bricks have been lost from the head of the fireplace surround but it is probably still stable. Whilst doing stabilisation works, it would probably be worth putting centring in to give it some stability.
- 3.110 The inspecting architect noted water coming down the chimney flue but was unable to see into the flue. An allowance should be made for some emergency repair in this to stabilise any loose or collapsing brickwork.

North Elevation

- 3.111 The two-light window retains much of its original masonry, although the central mullion is concrete. The jamb stones are all Reigate stone, heavily over smeared with sand and cement and the window is supported at high level by a concrete lintel onto which are bolted timbers for the roof structure.
- 3.112 The jambs are all heavily eroded and cubing. The hard sand and cement repairs should be removed and it is likely that, unfortunately, an allowance will have to be made for some emergency tile repair insertions to stabilise the surrounding brickwork, which is already moving on both the left and right hand sides.
- 3.113 The masonry to the windows is in reasonable condition, although heavily weathered.

North-East Elevation

- 3.114 This is also constructed of brickwork and there is a blocked two-light window, which has been heavily sand and cement repaired. Surviving jamb stones are in Reigate stone but also heavily sand and cement repaired and there is a concrete lintel above. There are recesses in the brickwork, presumably for the panelling battens.
- 3.115 The brickwork would benefit from some stabilisation to ensure that further material is not lost, particularly on the right hand corner where bricks are physically loose. This is needed to ensure longer term survival.

- 3.116 The hard material should be removed from the jamb stones and an allowance made for some tile repairs to ensure they are secure. The lintel is secure. The window is in reasonable condition, although heavily sand and cement repaired.
- 3.117 The roof above is leaking badly but this will be discussed separately.

East Elevation

- 3.118 The east elevation contains a two-light window, heavily sand and cement repaired and with a concrete mullion. The cill and lintel are also concrete. Surrounding brickwork is original and there is a modern concrete lintel above the robbed out opening into the staircase.
- 3.119 Severe concern is expressed about the imminent likelihood of collapse of the roof structure. The inspecting architect was worried when standing beneath it. It is only remaining in position because the plywood sheeting is holding the roof rafters together and it is in immediate danger of collapse.
- 3.120 Significant allowance should be made for the conservation and repair of the brickwork around the opening into the staircase. The sand and cement repairs should be removed from the window jambs and it is likely that major tile repairs will be required around this window due to its continuing saturation.

ROOF

- 3.121 The roof structure is modern and comprises 2" x 10" or 2" x 12" softwood timbers, essentially running north-west to south-east, with plywood decking above and noggins between that are built onto secondary timbers bolted into the walls. Water from the roof is discharged via a plastic downpipe in the south-east corner and into the base of the Tower.
- 3.122 There has been a catastrophic collapse of the roof structure in the south-east corner and the only reason it is staying in place is that the plywood sheets are holding the rafters in position. There is water penetration through most elevations.
- 3.123 The whole roof structure will have to be dismantled, all the plywood sheeting taken off, the joists reused where possible but new joists inserted and a completely new timber structure in the south-east corner and the roof redesigned so it takes water away to the exterior of the building.
- 3.124 The inspecting architect strongly advises that nobody comes up here unless they are fully aware of the dangers and do not stand in the south-east corner or, ideally, under the roof structure.
- 3.125 This corner will have to be structurally supported before any work is carried out to the interior of the tower.

Garderobe Interior

- 3.126 The ground floor of the garderobe is constructed of original brickwork with two dividing walls for the two garderobe pits. Some modern brickwork has been inserted into one of the robbed out arches, presumably to stabilise the fabric. Looking into the two far pits, which are not easily accessed, the brickwork appears to be in reasonable condition. It is fairly heavily eroded when you reach first floor level but it is stable at present.

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- 3.127 There was likely to have been a doorway in the west wall but this is now a window. There is robbed out material at low level and this probably needs to be reinstated for the longer term stability of this piece of walling. The window contains a modern steel frame with anti-pigeon mesh and this appears stable. A great deal of material has been robbed out around the right hand side of the window and this should be reinstated using a tile repair to stabilise this corner of the window and to ensure the longer term stability of the window. However, generally the structure is in reasonable condition and is stable.
- 3.128 The next point of access to the garderobe from the scaffolding is from the second floor. One is able to look down onto the dividing walls that originally separated the pits. These need some consolidation on the top to ensure they do not deteriorate further. The space is again constructed of original brickwork with the remains of renders surviving on a number of the walls. There is a further brick flue in one corner and this goes up to the next floors and is likely to be an insertion. It still retains timber bearers, probably for the fixing of panelling. This brickwork is in reasonable condition. The interior of the shaft has some weathering and perhaps pointing will be required in the longer term to stabilise it.
- 3.129 The next small space is accessed through an arch from the second floor scaffolding. There is an original window on the west elevation protected by anti-pigeon mesh. This mesh is in poor condition. The timber bressumer above appears stable, although there is erosion on the stonework. Longer term conservation will be required. Some plaster has been lost below this window.
- 3.130 The blocked opening on the south wall is presumed to have lead into the range of buildings to the south and there is a timber bressumer above. A great deal of modern brickwork has been inserted. This blocking appears secure at present.
- 3.131 The third scaffold lift is similar to the second with the exception that the shaft in the corner has been robbed out and the top of the wall needs consolidation if it is to remain stable. The large void in the southern wall adjacent to this requires attention.
- 3.132 There is clear evidence within this space that the floor would have gone in about 5' above the current scaffold level and remains of plaster survive. The walls generally are fairly stable, despite the fact that the shaft generally is open to the top. There is loss of plaster on the internal walls but not a great deal can be done about that. Bricks have been robbed out around the doorway leading into the main Tower and some minor work would be desirable to consolidate this.
- 3.133 The fourth scaffold lift is a square chamber. The shaft has disappeared in one corner and clearly did not continue to this height. The walls are constructed of original brickwork with a small buttress-like feature in the south-east corner.
- 3.134 The west window is original but the head stones, bressumer and cills have been robbed out and the jamb stones are parting from the wall. This window needs urgent conservation and stabilisation if it is to remain secure. The anti-pigeon mesh should be replaced and an assessment undertaken of works required in the longer term.
- 3.135 All the brickwork above the doorway leading into the main tower is about to collapse and there is an urgent need for the insertion of temporary lintels to support this material. Consolidation and probably tile repairs will then be required to ensure no further material is lost.

- 3.136 The top lift is just below the remaining wall height level. Bricks are original but the wall head was rebuilt in the 20th century with a hard concrete top. There was originally anti-pigeon mesh across this space but that has now collapsed. There are anti-pigeon wires on the top of the wall but most of those are now coming off. The remains of a lightning protection system runs around this and all the parapets at high level but there is no evidence of termination or air terminals, therefore it is unlikely this is doing anything.
- 3.137 The top of this turret needs urgent consolidation to avoid the collapse of one or two areas. It would be very prudent to put a temporary roof over this to slow down the rate of decay, carry out the consolidation necessary and then mothball the turret ready for proper conservation in due course.

Spiral Staircase Interior

- 3.138 The ground floor is entered through an original archway with Reigate stone dressings with modern grille and doorway. The archway needs significant conservation of the stonework if it is to remain stable. Concern is expressed about the condition of the head stones and some interventionist conservation will be necessary to save those but they might have to cease being structural. The jamb stones are all heavily weathered and will need some consolidation if they are to remain stable.
- 3.139 There is a great deal of debris in the ground floor and the remains of the spiral staircase runs up in one corner. The staircase is a brick tube, partly rendered at low level, but much of this is likely to be modern. There are a number of stones on the floor following a collapse at higher level.
- 3.140 The ground floor is generally fairly stable. The staircase is not conservable and can only be left as a ruin. The door leading to the east is barricaded and not of any great quality. This could be replaced with something more suitable in the longer term.
- 3.141 The timber bressumer above the door has been affected by fire but is in reasonable condition, as is the stonework surrounding the doorway when viewed internally.
- 3.142 The first floor scaffold lift allows you to see the next section of the stair turret. No remains of the staircase survive. There is an opening to the west leading into what would have been the southern range of buildings. There are some areas of modern patch repair in brickwork and areas of robbed out brickwork on the west where the spiral staircase would have been. These do not go very far in and so it was relying on the central newel as much as any bearing off the walls. There is a blocked doorway on the south elevation.
- 3.143 There are a couple of movement cracks leading up from the doorway at low level with a large timber bressumer but the brickwork is in reasonable condition and nothing is particularly unstable where the staircase has been robbed out and some minor conservation and grouting should be all that is required to ensure it remains stable.
- 3.144 The second scaffold lift is virtually a repeat of the floor below, with the exception that there is a delightful small quatrefoil window facing north with a timber bressumer above that is likely to be original as it has label stops. The head of the doorway facing south is also visible. Also, the head of the doorway facing west, which would have led to the southern range, with timber bressumers above and there is an original window facing east. The bressumer has been robbed out recently and the scar for the staircase survives.

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- 3.145 A small amount of conservation is required to the small quatrefoil window to ensure it remains stable. The bressumer is a delightful survival. The insertion of a new bressumer in the east facing window is essential, as is new anti-pigeon mesh.
- 3.146 The blocked doorway to the south is in reasonable condition and should be left alone.
- 3.147 The jamb stones of the door opening that would have led into the southern range are in very poor condition and some replacement, possibly in tile, is required. The large open joint in the head requires attention but the bressumers appear to be holding at present. The rest of the brickwork is in reasonable condition.
- 3.148 The third scaffold lift is a repeat of the stage below with one window facing north-east in original stonework with a timber bressumer and surviving original ferramenta. The anti-pigeon mesh is rather ineffective. The robbed out scar for the staircase survives. The minor movement cracks are not a cause for concern at present.
- 3.149 Significant concern is expressed about the brickwork around the doorway leading into the upper chamber. There is imminent danger of collapse of material both down the side jambs and below. Also, looking up, all the arch stones at ground floor level have come from this opening due to the water penetration above. The concrete lintels are losing their bearing and there is imminent danger of collapse. The inspecting architect suggests that nobody accesses this area until temporary propping has been inserted.
- 3.150 The staircase continues in the same design at the fourth scaffold lift and there are quatrefoil openings to the south and north and the scar of the staircase continues up. There is a further scaffold lift above this but it is completely occupied by pigeons who did not disperse when the inspecting architect tried to shoo them out.
- 3.151 Close examination of the archway leading into the upper room shows there is significant danger of collapse. The two small quatrefoils are in fair condition but the bressumers are in need of ultimate replacement and that on the south has virtually disappeared. The scar of the former staircase is a little deeper here and possibly some longer term grouting and consolidation is needed to try and stabilise this.
- 3.152 The inspecting architect viewed the level above from the third scaffold lift. There has been a rebuild on the top of the turret and there is significant erosion of brickwork and pointing and trees growing out of this turret. Major removal of the trees and consolidation is needed to ensure it remains stable. It is strongly urged that a roof is put on top of this as an emergency measure to slow down the rate of decay.
- 3.153 The blocked window facing north-east appears to be fairly intact and is a good survival.

4. Exterior of Tower

GROUND LEVEL

Staircase Wall Facing West

- 4.1 This is the wall onto the spiral staircase which would have continued as part of the southern range. It is constructed of both Tudor brickwork and possibly 19th century Kentish ragstone blocking with one blocked opening that would have run northwards and with the archway into the base of the spiral staircase. The wall continues to form the end wall of the adjacent property.

- 4.2 This wall is in reasonable condition and minor conservation and repair is all that is needed in the longer term. The removal of ivy would be beneficial.

South Elevation

- 4.3 This includes the return into the entrance area which would have been part of the southern range. It is also constructed of Tudor brickwork with an original arched opening leading into the base of the Tower. There are remains of render surviving, as well as vertical grooves which are possibly for internal doors. The external quoins are Kentish ragstone and the wall, where it is external to the building, has a plinth course constructed of Kentish ragstone with Tudor brickwork in a diaper pattern above and quoin stones.
- 4.4 There is significant weathering of the stonework to the doorway into the Tower and this will be checked from the first floor. The large sand and cement repairs at the base will be detrimental to the fabric in the longer term. This walling is holding up remarkably well. The remains of renders are interesting.
- 4.5 The large areas of sand and cement repairs on the quoin stones on the corner facing the entrance into the Tower will need to be removed and at least one of the quoins is disintegrating and probably needs replacement. The one above has weathered back very badly and replacement will be required in the longer term.
- 4.6 The sand and cement pointing to the plinth needs to be removed to allow the plinth to breathe. The brickwork above is in remarkably good condition and the quoin stones on the external corner are in satisfactory condition.

West Elevation of Toilet Block

- 4.7 This continues with the plinth course at low level and diaper brickwork at high level but base coats of render survive and this indicates that it was probably internal at some point. There is an original doorway opening leading into the wardrobe and the bottom half of the adjacent window survives.
- 4.8 The sand and cement pointing is unfortunate and the blocking to the doorway is modern and not of great historical interest. The plinth has been heavily sand and cement pointed and it should be longer term aim to remove this to allow the wall to breathe. Quoins are weathering on the external corner but this is not too bad.
- 4.9 The ferramenta to the window is modern and could be replaced with something more suitable. The sand and cement repairs to the stonework appear stable but a longer term aim should be to replace these with a mortar repair.

South-West Facet

- 4.10 This also has a plinth course with brickwork above and the bottom section of one of the windows. The window has been heavily repaired with sand and cement and this will not be helping the friable Kentish ragstone or Reigate stone behind and will need to be replaced in the longer term.
- 4.11 The brickwork is in reasonable condition and, although the clasping quoins on the corner are weathering, they are reasonably stable at present and could be conserved. The plinth has been heavily sand and cement pointed and, ideally, should be repointed with a more suitable material.

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West Elevation

- 4.12 The west elevation is a continuation of that described previously and contains a two-light window. Similar comments apply to the hard cementitious pointing and replacement of some of the upper stones is likely to be required once the pointing has been removed.
- 4.13 The concrete mullion to the window is unfortunate, as are the sand and cement repaired jambs and cill. This will need significant conservation in the longer term but it appears reasonably stable at present, certainly for the next year or two.

North-West Elevation

- 4.14 This also has a plinth course with diaper brickwork above and clasping quoins on the two external corners. Similar comments apply about the plinth course. Brickwork has been partly sand and cement pointed, probably following a collapse. This is generally in reasonable condition and only minor repairs will be required.

FIRST SCAFFOLD LIFT

West Elevation of Spiral Staircase

- 4.15 The west elevation has modern brickwork at high level as part of the adjacent house. It is assumed that this is not part of the inspection. There is the top of the opening at ground floor level into the spiral staircase with the bottom section of the opening above that led into the staircase. The remaining fabric is in Tudor brickwork with Kentish ragstone at low level and the large sand and cement batter to protect the thickening of the wall at low level would originally have supported a floor.
- 4.16 There is significant delamination in the jamb stones of the upper opening and hard cement repairs. These will need significant conservation and repair.
- 4.17 The adjacent quoin stones are in a similar condition and are disintegrating and are not likely to last much longer and it would be prudent to assume tile repairs are required now to give stabilisation.
- 4.18 The brickwork at the bottom of the opening also needs stabilisation to prevent further loss.
- 4.19 The wall generally has ivy and other growth that will need to be removed to ensure it does not deteriorate further but the brickwork will last two to three years before any significant work would be required. However, some repointing would be desirable.
- 4.20 The head of the doorway at low level is acceptable at present.

South Elevation

- 4.21 This includes the same areas as the ground floor. The cill and jamb stones of the opening that led into the first floor level of the Tower has been completely robbed out and urgent conservation and consolidation is required to avoid significant loss of fabric and collapse.
- 4.22 The doorway below this into the Tower is stable but the brickwork is saturated by water penetration and protection is thought to be the best approach for the next two to three years.

- 4.23 Moving to the left, there is a large scar where the floor has been removed. The brickwork on the east side of the garderobe has been over-pointed but it is stable. There is a lightning conductor tape running down in this corner.
- 4.24 The brickwork in the southern facet of the garderobe is in acceptable condition. There is a blocked opening at this level. The quoin stones are stable, although sand and cement repaired. The sand and cement pointing is unfortunate but is minor and is probably best left alone at this stage.

West Elevation of Garderobe

- 4.25 This is virtually a completely blank wall with the remains of render at low level where perhaps a ground floor structure has been removed. The tops of the window and door are visible.
- 4.26 There are a number of vertical cracks in the elevation but it appears stable. Some of the repointing is unfortunate but the elevation is best left alone for the next two to three years. The sand and cement repairs on the quoins appear to be stable. All hard material should be removed in the longer term.

South-West Elevation

- 4.27 The brickwork is in reasonable condition and the clasping quoins are generally stable at present but two or three will need replacement in the longer term and a number of others will need careful mortar repair if they are to remain stable. The head of the window has been heavily sand and cement repaired and the stonework is friable where this is falling off. Longer term conservation will be required and it is hoped that it can be saved rather than replaced but significant repairs will be required on the jamb stones in the longer term.

West Elevation

- 4.28 Areas of the brickwork have been heavily repointed and the clasping quoins on both corners need conservation and repair if they are to remain stable. Unfortunately, a longer term aim might have to be replaced one or two of these.
- 4.29 The two-light window is heavily sand and cement repaired and the jamb stones and the head will need conservation and repair. There is some cubing of the stonework but there is probably enough to survive but careful conservation will be required. The concrete central mullion is unfortunate.

North-West Elevation

- 4.30 The brickwork is in remarkably good condition. The clasping quoins were mentioned previously. Some conservation and repair will be needed to those on the right hand side but the weathering reduces significantly as one goes round this part of the building. No immediate conservation is required.

North Elevation

- 4.31 This matches the west elevation. The brickwork is generally in reasonable condition, although heavily sand and cement pointed, which is a shame and it should be a longer term aim to remove this. The clasping quoins on both corners are in reasonable condition but conservation will be required in the longer term.

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- 4.32 The head, jambs and tracery elements of the two-light window are heavily sand and cement repaired. The mullion is concrete. This window will need some longer term conservation and repair. The cill is eroded but probably stable. Any new glazing should be carefully considered. The modern steel grilles should be replaced with a more suitable material.
- 4.33 The inspecting architect looked at the wall below through the gaps in the boarding. The plinth course is sand and cement and significant repointing will be required.

North-East Elevation

- 4.34 This is a mirror image of its companion facing north. The brickwork has been sand and cement pointed but is in reasonable condition. The clasping quoins on the left hand side are significantly weathered and will need some conservation and repair.
- 4.35 The two-light window is heavily sand and cement repaired on the upper areas and the jambs and the concrete mullion will need longer term conservation and repair but appears stable for the short term. Isolated jamb stones have weathered back significantly and a decision will have to be taken on whether they are replaced or heavily mortar repaired.

East Elevation

- 4.36 This is similar to the north-east elevation. Brickwork is generally holding up remarkably well, although there has been some sand and cement pointing. It is heavily affected by water penetration from the failed roof above and this reinforces the need for the roof to be tackled.
- 4.37 The two-light window has been heavily sand and cement repaired and has a concrete mullion. The mullion is spalling and will need to be replaced. The jamb stones on the left hand side are heavily affected by water penetration from above and, again, this urgently reinforces the need for the roof to be tackled. The cill also requires repair. The hard cement pointing on the plinth course, and all other plinth courses on the Tower, should be removed. The grilles are also inappropriate.

Stair Turret

- 4.38 The stair turret is part octagonal in original brickwork with clasping quoins on the two external corners. There is a doorway at ground floor level. The Tower sits on a plinth course, the top of which could be viewed from the scaffolding.
- 4.39 The hard cement pointing should be removed from the plinth course in the longer term and repairs carried out to the upper plinth stone. The clasping quoins will need some longer term conservation and repair but they appear fairly stable at present.
- 4.40 The brickwork has not been heavily sand and cement over-pointing and some tuck pointing survives. This is generally not suffering too badly but the brickwork is saturated where the roof has failed and this reinforces the need for repair.

SECOND FLOOR

West Elevation of Stair Turret

- 4.41 This solely covers the stair turret and not the adjacent house. It is constructed of Tudor brickwork with a Kentish ragstone arched opening into the turret and quoin stones on the external corner.

- 4.42 The quoin stones are in extremely poor condition and there is a void going back into the adjacent house. These quoins will not last very much longer and they should initially be replaced with a tile repair and a longer term view taken. The adjacent sand and cement repairs should also be removed.
- 4.43 The opening into the stair turret is heavily sand and cement repaired, the jamb stones are cubing and falling apart. A decision will have to be taken in the longer term on whether all the stonework has to be replaced or if it can be supported in another way. Repairs will be required to stabilise the remainder to avoid further loss.

South Elevation

- 4.44 The south elevation covers the entrance into the Tower and the south and east facets of the garderobe.
- 4.45 The doorway has been almost completely robbed out and only the inner arch and its jamb stones survive with timber bressumers above.
- 4.46 The bressumers are starting to rot and the material they are sitting on is moving. Consolidation is required as a matter of urgency to avoid the loss of this fabric.
- 4.47 The doorway behind will also need the replacement of its jamb stones if it is going to survive insitu. It would be best to include centring as a temporary measure to ensure it remains stable.
- 4.48 The major tree should be removed from the cill below and consolidation carried out to try and slow down the decay.
- 4.49 The two adjacent elevations are in reasonable condition. The remains of internal render is evident and there is a lightning conductor tape. Nothing needs to be done to these.
- 4.50 There is evidence of a blocked opening in the southern facet of the garderobe. This elevation is holding up remarkably well. Some minor longer term conservation will be required to the quoin stones on the external corner but replacement is not required at present.

West Elevation of Garderobe

- 4.51 The brickwork is in satisfactory condition but unfortunately parts have been sand and cement pointed. The small Kentish ragstone window is heavily sand and cement repaired, the jamb stones are failing and it is unlikely they can be saved. The cill is also in poor condition. A small amount of work now will give stability, along with centring, and the anti-pigeon mesh needs to be replaced. Major conservation will be required in the longer term.

South-West Elevation

- 4.52 The brickwork in this elevation and the clasping quoins on the corner are in reasonable condition. The single light window is heavily sand and cement repaired and it will need major conservation and repair in the longer term. The jamb stones, whilst delaminating and friable, are probably salvageable for weathering purposes but the window needs new anti-pigeon mesh as a matter of urgency.

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- 4.53 The brickwork has been partly over pointed in sand and cement and it would be desirable for this to be removed.

West Elevation

- 4.54 The west elevation is in brickwork and the sand and cement pointing is unfortunate. However, it is generally in reasonable condition. The clasping quoins on the two external corners will need some longer term conservation and repair and removal of hard cement repairs but are holding up reasonably well.

- 4.55 The central mullion has been replaced with modern sandstone. The jamb stones and cill are heavily sand and cement repaired or weathered but they are probably salvageable in the longer term if careful conservation is undertaken and new windows inserted to try and shed water off. The anti-pigeon mesh needs to be replaced.

North-West Elevation

- 4.56 This is also in brickwork with clasping quoins on the two external corners. This is generally in reasonable condition, although the hard cement pointing is unfortunate as are the sand and cement repairs to the quoins. These are longer term conservation needs.

North Elevation

- 4.57 This is a mirror image of the west elevation, with the exception that the window is blocked and retains all its original masonry, including some small pins that are possibly for external shutters. The stonework could be conserved and consolidated for its longer term protection, certainly before the shutter pins are lost.

- 4.58 The brickwork in the blocking is in reasonable condition but general brickwork has unfortunately been heavily sand and cement pointed and needs to be removed. The quoins on both external corners are in reasonable condition and their conservation in the longer term is all that is required.

North-East Elevation

- 4.59 This matches that previously described but the window is open. The central mullion has been replaced with sandstone, the window has been heavily sand and cement repaired and is heavily weathered.

- 4.60 It should be a longer term aim to decide if this is replaced or mortar repaired to allow a new window to be inserted. The anti-pigeon mesh should be completely replaced.

- 4.61 The brickwork has been heavily sand and cement repointed, which is unfortunate and this should be removed. The quoins on the two external corners are generally in reasonable condition but there are a couple that are likely to need replacement in the longer term.

East Elevation

- 4.62 This matches the elevation at ground level and the bottom section of the window is visible. The window cill is in poor condition, as are the jambs which are heavily sand and cement repaired and badly affected by water penetration from above. The central mullion is sandstone. This window will need longer term conservation and repair and new anti-pigeon mesh.

- 4.63 The sand and cement pointing in the brickwork should be removed. The brickwork is also affected by the water entering through the failed roof and this again reinforces the need for the roof to be repaired.

Stair Turret

- 4.64 The three facets of the stair turret match those at ground floor level with the exception that there is a beautiful small quatrefoil facing north and a lovely surviving window facing east. The east facing window retains much of its detail and it could be carefully consolidated and repaired, possibly protected and will remain insitu.
- 4.65 The brickwork generally and the clasping quoins are in remarkable condition and no major concerns are expressed.
- 4.66 The small quatrefoil is a delightful survival and it could be carefully conserved.

THIRD SCAFFOLD LIFT

Staircase South and West Elevations

- 4.67 The south elevation is above the roof of the adjacent property. It is in brickwork and has a string course above roof level. Quoins are Kentish ragstone and the scar can be seen for the roof that would have been part of the southern range. There is a lead back gutter between this masonry and the roof but this is presumed to be in the ownership of the adjoining property and is full of grass.
- 4.68 Although partly sand and cement pointed, the brickwork is holding up remarkably well. However, some allowance should be made for some conservation and repair work to give it stability. The work would be fairly minimal at this stage to include some grouting of cracks and removal of plant growth. The quoins are in reasonable condition.

South Elevation

- 4.69 This elevation contains the entrance into the Tower, as well as the south and east elevations of the garderobe which are all in brickwork. There are visible scars for the southern wing and embedded leadwork in the adjacent brickwork on both sides showing the position of the parapet gutters. All walls have been heavily sand and cement repaired and there are surviving base coats of render.
- 4.70 The string course seen on the turret appears on the southern facet of the garderobe and there is a definite scar from the roof line of an adjacent building.
- 4.71 The wall over the entrance into the Tower is heavily affected by water penetration from above and this again reinforces the need for the roof to be tackled. Vegetation growth should also be removed and some repointing carried out.
- 4.72 The rest of the facets are in reasonable condition. There is some weathering on the string course and conservation would be desirable in the longer term but it still has some life left in it. The scar indicating the removal of the roofs could be left but it should be carefully pointed to ensure water does not enter. Removal of the hard pointing would be essential to allow everything to breathe and repointing in a good quality mix to ensure stability of the brickwork.

West Elevation of Garderobe

- 4.73 This is essentially a continuation of the south elevation with the string course. The hard cementitious pointing on the brickwork is unfortunate but, although there has been some replacement of the dressed stonework, isolated stones in the string course will need replacement in the longer term to ensure stabilisation and removal of the hard pointing will always be beneficial. However, this elevation is holding up remarkably well.

South-West Elevation

- 4.74 This is really a continuation of the previous elevation with the head of a window at low level. Significant parts of the string course have been weathered back to the line of the brickwork and a decision should be taken regarding their replacement for weathering purposes or a sand and cement and lead cap provided. The brickwork has been fairly heavily sand and cement over pointed and this will need to be removed to allow everything to breathe but it is holding up remarkably well.
- 4.75 The head of the window will need some repair but can probably be kept if a lead weathering is inserted to shed water away.

West Elevation

- 4.76 This is essentially a continuation of that previously described, with the head of a two-light window in the lower section. The brickwork has been heavily over pointed in the past and much of this is coming out. The clasping quoins on the two external corners will require longer term conservation and repair but nothing is thought to require replacement at present. Two or three of these might require replacement in the longer term, perhaps when the major works are undertaken.
- 4.77 The hard pointing should be removed and repointing carried out. The string course is mainly modern and in good condition.
- 4.78 The head of the two-light window will require significant conservation and repair if it is to survive, followed by discussions on ways to provide weathering.

North-West Elevation

- 4.79 This is a continuation of previous elevations and has a string course. All the brickwork has been heavily sand and cement pointed and this needs to be removed. Quoin stones are weathered but not disintegrating and could therefore be retained for a period of time. The string course is a replacement.

North Elevation

- 4.80 The north elevation is a mirror image of the west elevation but the window has been blocked at low level. There are the remains of some decorative detail within the string course. The brickwork has been sand and cement pointed and this should be removed. The quoin stones on the corners are weathered but in reasonable condition and conservation is probably all that is required.
- 4.81 The two-light window is in very good condition and conservation is the best way forward to retain this and possibly provide leadwork protection.

North-East Elevation

- 4.82 This is a mirror image of that previously described. The window is open. All the brickwork has been heavily sand and cement repointed and this should be removed. The quoin stones are weathered but in reasonable condition. The string course is in acceptable condition.
- 4.83 The central parts of the window tracery have been replaced with modern sandstone but much of the detail in the head survives. Careful conservation will be required in the longer term.

East Elevation

- 4.84 This elevation matches those below and contains the string course and the head of the two-light window. All the brickwork has been sand and cement pointed and this needs to be removed. There is a great deal of plant growth in the string course and there are fractures caused by the saturation of the brickwork from the failed roof. There is evidence that there was some detail at the head of the window but that has now been lost and this reinforces the need for the roof to be tackled.
- 4.85 The window is in reasonable condition but conservation is required, the hard repairs taken out and more appropriate repairs inserted in the longer term. New anti-pigeon mesh should also be provided.

Stair Turret

- 4.86 The three facets are similar to those described previously and there is a string course and a good quality window surviving in the north-eastern facet of the staircase and clasping quoins as previously described. There is a surviving gargoyle on the south-eastern corner of the string course with a further facet facing south-east. The gargoyle is a beautiful little survival. The brickwork has been heavily sand and cement pointed and should be repointed in the correct materials. All the quoin stones are showing weathering but none have yet reached the point of collapse. Much of the string course is a 20th century replacement.
- 4.87 There has been modern replacement around the window but if more appropriate replacement is undertaken this window could be conserved and kept for the longer term. It retains its original ferramenta, which is nice to see. Anti-pigeon mesh should be inserted.

FOURTH SCAFFOLD LIFT

Stair Turret

- 4.88 It is possible to walk around the entire outside of the stair turret. This is part octagonal with facets facing north, north-east, east, south-east, south and west and is constructed of Tudor brickwork with clasping quoins at all the junctions. There are delightful little quatrefoil windows in the south and north elevations and the bottom part of a larger window on the north-east elevation, the top of which will be viewed from the next scaffold lift. All brickwork has been heavily sand and cement pointed.
- 4.89 The quoins on the north elevation are parting from the brickwork. This is due to the water penetration from above and pointing, grouting and possibly some pinning, will be required. The hard pointing should be removed from the north-east elevation and a small amount of work is required around the window at high level to give some consolidation.

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- 4.90 The quoin stones on the other facets are all weathered but are stable. The hard pointing should be removed from all the other facets, as well as a fairly substantial tree on the south elevation.
- 4.91 The hard pointing should be removed from the top of the buttress on the south-west corner, which will allow it to breathe. The plant growth should also be removed.
- 4.92 All the brickwork on these facets is suffering from water penetration from the open turret at high level and also from the roof.

South Elevation

- 4.93 The south elevation are the walls of the entrance into the Tower and the east and south walls of the garderobe. These are in brickwork and have been heavily over pointed in the past, probably with a sand and cement based material. Much of the pointing is coming out due to the water penetration from high level. There is also a substantial tree. The quoins are in reasonable condition, although they are weathered and some conservation would be desirable.
- 4.94 The hard pointing should be removed from the south and east facets of the garderobe but these are not suffering as badly as the first elevation.

South Elevation of Garderobe

- 4.95 This is also in brickwork, heavily over pointed in the past and with a good quality single light window that is heavily sand and cement repaired. The sand and cement repairs should be removed as it is causing the stonework to delaminate and split. The sill is in poor condition. This window should be weathered to try and slow down the rate of decay. The slight movement crack above the window is likely to be due to water penetration from above.
- 4.96 The elevation would benefit from the removal of the hard pointing to allow it to breathe, and for some consolidation of the window to ensure no further fabric is lost in the immediate future.

South-West Elevation

- 4.97 Brickwork is heavily sand and cement pointed. The blocked has also been completely sand and cement repaired and it is likely that all the material inside is in poor condition. This should be removed and mortar repairs carried out to weather it. The quoin stones are in reasonable condition and it is the hard pointing and saturation that are causing the damage.

West Elevation

- 4.98 The west elevation has a blocked two-light window that has been heavily sand and cement repaired and with a heavily sand and cement repaired concrete central mullion. All the surrounding brickwork is sand and cement pointed and the clasping quoins also exhibit sand and cement repairs.
- 4.99 All the hard pointing and repairs should be removed and careful conservation undertaken to ensure no further material is lost. The quoins are all weathered but are thought to be structurally sound. Careful conservation will be required around them to ensure they do not weather back further and cause destabilisation of the brickwork.

North-West Elevation

- 4.100 This elevation requires the removal of all the hard pointing. It is saturated from the roof above. Work is required around the quoin stones to give weathering to slow down the rate of decay. It is likely that once this elevation can breathe, some of the bricks will disintegrate. There is movement around some of the quoins and water is getting in behind the quoins at high level and this will need to be tackled to prevent further loss.

North Elevation

- 4.101 All the brickwork has been heavily sand and cement pointed. This should be removed to allow the brickwork to breathe. Quoin stones on the corners are heavily weathered and work is required to ensure water does not get in and around them and also to protect the brickwork.
- 4.102 The jambs and cills of the two-light window are heavily weathered and it has a concrete mullion. Urgent work is required on the jambs and cill to prevent further loss and further consideration will have to be given to how much further consolidation or replacement is needed to conserve this fabric.

North-East Elevation

- 4.103 All this brickwork has also been heavily sand and cement repointed and this needs to be removed. The blocked window has also been heavily sand and cement repaired and has concrete mullions. This window needs urgent conservation to avoid the loss of more significant material. The quoin stones also need conservation to try and slow down the rate of decay. The window cill needs urgent repair as water can now enter the brickwork below.

East Elevation

- 4.104 The hard pointing in all the brickwork needs replacing with more appropriate material. It is completely saturated as a result of the failed roof at high level. The two-light window has been heavily sand and cement repaired and the jamb stones on both sides and the cill are in danger of loss. Urgent consolidation work is required to hold this in position. The brickwork below the window is saturated and material is about to be lost. There is also a great deal of plant growth. The central mullion is concrete and the stool on which it sits is crodng and work is required to ensure it remains stable.

TOP SCAFFOLD LIFT

- 4.105 The top scaffold lift allows a view of the top of the Tower walls on all elevations, the garderobe and the stair turret. As a general rule, all walls have been heavily sand and cement over pointed, the tops of the walls are modern brickwork with what appears to be a dpc and concrete weathering. The tops of the walls are protected by a lightning conductor tape system and anti-pigeon wires. The lightning conductor tape does not appear to be attached to anything.
- 4.106 Generally, all the hard pointing needs to be removed from all of the walls as a matter of urgency to ensure the walls can breathe, and repointing carried out in a more appropriate material. It would be prudent to look at protecting the tops of the walls with projecting stonework and roof to try and slow down the rate of water penetration.

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- 4.107 Major trees are growing out of the top of the stair turret and there are vertical cracks in a number of the elevations, which need to be pointed and grouted. The brickwork on the top is lifting where the trees are growing and we are in danger of losing sections of the top brickwork if nothing is done in the immediate future.
- 4.108 The stair turret window facing north-east needs some careful conservation and protection to avoid the loss of the jambs and there is also movement around the quoins in this area, so pointing and grouting is also required.
- 4.109 The east facing window has a concrete head and heavily sand and cement repaired tracery and jambs. This appears to be stable at present but some of the high level quoins on the turret have been replaced with concrete.
- 4.110 The window head on the north-east facet is heavily sand and cement repaired but it appears stable. This is also true of the window head facing north but some of these details are coming off and therefore conservation and repair is required.
- 4.111 A number of the surviving quoins will need conservation and pointing around them to shed water off. It is clear that generally water sheds off the top of the walls and saturates the material below causing significant issues.
- 4.112 The west facing window has suffered major concrete replacements but it appears to be stable.
- 4.113 Some small voids are appearing in the brickwork on the top of the garderobe and this will need pointing and also some deep grouting.

ROOF

- 4.114 The roof of the main Tower appears to be felt over a plywood deck with felt flashing going under the modern brickwork. This roof has completely collapsed in the south-west corner and needs urgent replacement to avoid putting the entire Tower at risk.
- 4.115 It would be prudent to look at improving the detail to include covering the cap to try and weather the Tower as a temporary measure to try and slow down the rate of decay whilst its future is being discussed. It would also be prudent to put roofs over the tops of the turret and the garderobe to reduce the rate of water penetration and decay in these areas.
- 4.116 All this work needs to be done as a matter of great urgency to avoid the loss of further material.

5. Gatehouse Fragment Exterior

- 5.1 The surviving fragment of the central Gatehouse consists of the ground floor of the Western Tower. This has a tiled roof with a hipped end facing north towards the Parish Church. The hips are finished with bonnet hips. Roof slopes are covered in plain tiles. The western slope is intersected by the roof of the adjacent housing and the gable facing onto the rear field is finished with a pointed tile course, timber rafter under and the remains of the rear Stair Turret which has a small hipped tiled roof with hip tiles on the corners.

- 5.2 The roof slopes generally discharge to plastic guttering and occasional downpipes with the rear turret roof discharging to fresh air. Eaves are formed by the ends of rafters.
- 5.3 The rear Stair Turret roof requires all the hip tiles to be re-bedded and a number of tiles replaced. The gabled end of the principal building requires a small amount of work on the timber rafters. Anti-pigeon generally need to be reinstated at eaves level.
- 5.4 There are missing and broken tiles on most of the roof slopes and these will need to be replaced to ensure the roof remains watertight. The hip tiles on the principal elevation facing north are in fair condition. The guttering, although slightly inadequate in size, does appear to be taking the water. It is a mixture of plastic and cast iron and it is therefore proposed that it should be overhauled and repaired. Downpipes are a mixture of plastic and aluminium. These discharge their water onto the ground. One of the aluminium pipes should be extended so that the water does actually reach the ground.
- 5.5 When viewed from ground level there is no strong indication that the eaves are in poor condition, however a small repair allowance should be made.

Walls

- 5.6 The remaining fragment of the stair tower is constructed on a Kentish ragstone plinth with a cant stone on top. The walls are in fair faced brickwork with quoins in Kentish ragstone. Window dressings are also in Kentish ragstone.
- 5.7 Starting with the western elevation, that is onto the adjoining garden, only small areas are visible above the roof of the adjoining property. There is a suggestion of roof spread but there is no indication, when viewed from an oblique angle, that it is in poor condition. There are a number of loose bricks on the top of the wall and the wall plate is not as well supported as it should be. Therefore it is proposed to reinstate the top of the wall head to support the brickwork. An allowance should also be made for additional work once access has been gained.
- 5.8 The next facet, that facing north-west, has a blocked single light window in it. All the hood mouldings have been partly pared back. The quoins are showing some distress and minor pointing and minor movement at the top of the one of the sets of quoins needs to be tackled, as well as conservation on the remaining fragments of the window and some pointing in the plinth. Generally speaking however it appears sound. In addition, one plinth stone will need to be replaced.
- 5.9 The next facet, that facing north, has a principal two-light window in it with the remains of a further window above. All dressings are in Kentish ragstone with the remains of diaper work in the brickwork.
- 5.10 The main window central mullion is heavily fractured and is on the point of failure. It is unfortunate but it will need to be replaced. The rest of the stonework can probably be carefully conserved and mortar repaired and the hood moulding partly repaired, and possibly lead inserted to protect the structure below. The rest of the brickwork is in good condition. One or two of the clasping quoins will need some conservation to slow down the rate of decay and minor pointing in the plinth.
- 5.11 The facet facing north-east matches that facing north-west with the addition that the blocked window has a couple of interesting light fittings and ventilators, and the main electrical cable going up through it. This elevation is reasonably well sheltered and therefore, apart from some very minor work, is probably best just left alone.

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- 5.12 The Gatehouse passage is essentially a blank wall with the return of the part-octagonal turret on the north end with some nice diaper work surviving. In this elevation is an original arched doorway which would have led into the Guardhouse. Adjacent is a modern opening with a timber door and modern brickwork above and probably a 19th century window has been inserted further along the elevation, close to where a scar exists for a former opening.
- 5.13 Starting at the octagonal end to the north, this is in good condition. Moving along, the brickwork above the modern door is bulging and moving out. This will need rebuilding and careful repair and is almost certainly not helped by the roof slightly spreading. The rest of the wall is probably best just left alone. Some bricks are weathering back but have not reached the stage where they should be interfered with. Towards the rear of the elevation are the remains of the inner arch with the base stone still surviving. The scar should be carefully conserved and pointed up, the ivy removed and the remaining base stones carefully re-set and plant growth removed so that this feature is not lost.
- 5.14 The rear Stair Turret fragment again is part octagonal in form, on a stone plinth with a delightful door facing south-east. There is some diaper work in the brickwork at high level and all the quoins are in Kentish ragstone.
- 5.15 The ivy and plant growth should be removed from this structure. Some very careful conservation and repair should be undertaken to the doorway to slow down the rate of decay. This doorway can just about be saved but it will need very careful work to slow down the continuing disintegration.
- 5.16 It is noted that on the doorway there will come a point when some of these stones will have to be replaced.
- 5.17 There is a requirement for minor pointing on the plinth course.
- 5.18 The gabled end of the elevation contains a two-light window with the head removed and a timber bressumer. The gable is in modern brickwork. Below this the gable is the original brickwork with a delightful window below the two-light window and it all sits on a plinth course.
- 5.19 The central mullion to the window is in very poor condition, as indeed are the jambs. Significant mortar repair and/or replacement will be required. Conservation of the quoins and other dressings will be necessary, as will repointing of the plinth.
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6. Recommendations

6.1 Immediate Conservation and Repair Needs

- 6.1.1 Interior ground floor repairs (3.7, 3.10, 3.15).
- 6.1.2 Interior first scaffold lift repairs (3.31, 3.32, 3.33, 3.34, 3.37, 3.41, 3.42, 3.43, 3.51, 3.54, 3.55, 3.59, 3.60, 3.61).
- 6.1.3 Interior second scaffold lift repairs (3.64, 3.65, 3.67, 3.70, 3.75, 3.82, 3.83, 3.85, 3.86, 3.87).
- 6.1.4 Interior third scaffold lift repairs (3.90, 3.91, 3.93, 3.94, 3.97, 3.98, 3.100, 3.101, 3.102, 3.103, 3.105, 3.106, 3.107, 3.109, 3.110, 3.112, 3.115, 3.116, 3.119, 3.120).
- 6.1.5 Roof interior (3.122, 3.123).
- 6.1.6 Garderobe interior (3.127, 3.128, 3.129, 3.131, 3.132, 3.134, 3.135, 3.137).
- 6.1.7 Spiral staircase interior (3.138, 3.143, 3.145, 3.147, 3.148, 3.149, 3.151, 3.152).
- 6.1.8 Exterior ground floor repair (4.5).
- 6.1.9 Exterior first scaffold lift (4.16, 4.17, 4.18, 4.19, 4.21, 4.22, 4.34, 4.37).
- 6.1.10 Exterior second scaffold lift (4.42, 4.43, 4.46, 4.47, 4.48, 4.51, 4.52, 4.55, 4.60, 4.61, 4.62, 4.63).
- 6.1.11 Exterior third scaffold lift (4.68, 4.71, 4.74, 4.75, 4.78, 4.79, 4.82, 4.84, 4.85, 4.86, 4.87).
- 6.1.12 Exterior fourth scaffold lift (4.89, 4.90, 4.91, 4.93, 4.94, 4.95, 4.96, 4.97, 4.99, 4.100, 4.101, 4.102, 4.103, 4.104).
- 6.1.13 Exterior top scaffold lift (4.106, 4.107, 4.108, 4.111, 4.113).
- 6.1.14 Roof (4.114, 4.115, 4.116).

6.2 Long Term Conservation and Repair Needs

- 6.2.1 Ground floor interior repairs (3.8, 3.9, 3.11, 3.12, 3.14, 3.15, 3.17, 3.18, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22, 3.23, 3.24, 3.27, 3.28).
- 6.2.2 First scaffold lift interior repairs (3.30, 3.38, 3.39, 3.43, 3.44, 3.47, 3.50, 3.51, 3.53, 3.55, 3.56, 3.61).
- 6.2.3 Interior second lift repairs (3.66, 3.68, 3.71, 3.72, 3.74, 3.78, 3.80, 3.87).
- 6.2.4 Interior third scaffold lift repairs (3.95, 3.99, 3.101, 3.107).
- 6.2.5 Garderobe interior (3.127, 3.128, 3.129).
- 6.2.6 Spiral staircase interior (3.140).
- 6.2.7 Exterior ground floor repair (4.2, 4.4, 4.5, 4.8, 4.9, 4.10, 4.11, 4.12, 4.13, 4.14, 4.33, 4.37).
- 6.2.8 Exterior first floor scaffold lift (4.24, 4.26, 4.27, 4.28, 4.29, 4.30, 4.31, 4.32, 4.35, 4.37, 4.39).
- 6.2.9 Exterior second scaffold lift (4.43, 4.50, 4.51, 4.52, 4.53, 4.54, 4.55, 4.56, 4.57, 4.58, 4.60, 4.62, 4.64).
- 6.2.10 Exterior third scaffold lift (4.72, 4.73, 4.74, 4.76, 4.77, 4.80, 4.81, 4.83).
- 6.2.11 Exterior top scaffold lift (4.110).

6.3 Gatehouse Immediate Conservation and Repair Needs

- 6.3.1 Roof repairs (5.3, 5.4)
- 6.3.2 Masonry repairs (5.7, 5.10, 5.13, 5.15, 5.19)

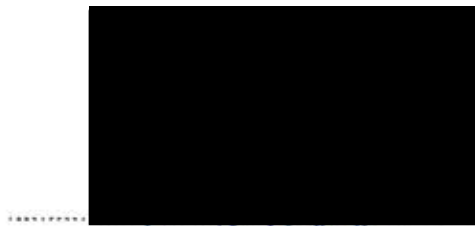
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6.4 Gatchouse Long Term Conservation and Repair Needs

6.4.1 Rainwater goods (5.4)

6.4.2 Masonry repairs (5.8, 5.10, 5.16)

SIGNED 



JOHN BAILEY B.A., B.Arch. AABC, RIBA

ref: 867501 Oxford Archbishop's Palace Inspector: 2015/mj

PROPERTY INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Cabinet – 16 July 2015

Report of	Chief Finance Officer
Status:	For Decision
Also considered by:	Council – 21 July 2015
Key Decision:	No

Executive Summary:

The Property Investment Strategy was approved by Council on 22 July 2014 to support the aim of the council becoming more financially self-sufficient as Government Support continues to reduce.

The initial acquisitions have been successful in taking the council some way towards this aim. This report requests additional funding to enable further acquisitions to help ensure that the council remains in a financially sustainable position going forwards.

Portfolio Holders Cllr. Fleming, Cllr Searles

Contact Officer(s) Adrian Rowbotham Ext. 7153
Mark Bradbury Ext. 7099

Recommendation to Cabinet:

- (a) Cabinet recommends to Council to agree to set aside a further £10m for the Property Investment Strategy from borrowing.
- (b) Cabinet recommends Council to approve the Amendment to the Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16.

Recommendation to Council:

- (a) That Council agrees to set aside a further £10m for the Property Investment Strategy from borrowing.
 - (b) That the Amendment to the Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16 be approved.
-

Introduction and Background

- 1 In recent years Sevenoaks District Council has been faced with ongoing reductions in Government Support. This has led to a number of decisions that have been

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taken through the 10 year budget process to try and ensure that the council remains in a financially sustainable position going forwards.

- 2 This position has been increasingly difficult to achieve due to the ongoing nature of budget reductions, compounded by continued low interest rates resulting in returns on treasury investments of between 0.5% and 1%. The Government's early comments suggest that at least for the next 2-3 years, Local Government is likely to face severe Government Support reductions in order to meet the requirement to reduce the national deficit.
- 3 The council has sought to address this position by regularly reviewing assumptions within the 10-year budget and by proposing appropriate reductions in service expenditure where achievable.
- 4 On 7 November 2013, Cabinet approved the Corporate Plan which sets out key focus areas for the organisation including the need to become more financially self-sufficient. The agreed plan articulates an approach of investing in assets that will generate revenue income to allow less reliance on diminishing Government Support. It goes on to state that this could be done either through the review of use of reserves or through borrowing at low interest rates.
- 5 On 22 July 2014, Council agreed the Property Investment Strategy set out in Appendix A.

Progress to Date

- 6 The following three acquisitions have been made to date:
 - Swanley Working Mens Club
 - Suffolk House, Sevenoaks – freehold office building
 - 73 – 75 High Street, Swanley – petrol filling station
- 7 Options for the development of Swanley Working Mens Club are ongoing and the other two premises are producing income yields in excess of 6%.

Funding

- 8 On 22 July 2014, Council agreed to set aside up to £5m from a review of reserves for the purpose of the proposals outlined in the Property Investment Strategy. On 17 February 2015, Council agreed that a further £3m be allocated to the Property Investment Strategy from the Capital Receipts Reserve.
- 9 Having made the initial acquisitions following the implementation of the strategy, which have used the £8m agreed to date, relevant Portfolio Holders are of the view that there is a clear requirement to push ahead so that the council can become more self-sufficient. Therefore it would be beneficial to set aside a further £10m for this purpose which can be funded from borrowing. It is likely that further capital receipts will be received from the sale of assets and when this arises, the options for their use will be analysed to ensure they are used in the most beneficial way.

- 10 Other initiatives are currently being investigated, and further funding through borrowing may be requested once these have progressed to a suitable stage.
- 11 Members are assured that any property acquisitions will be supported by a thorough business case and approved by the Policy and Performance Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Finance Portfolio Holder.
- 12 Based on our experience from the acquisitions to date, the current strength of the property market across the district and the type and lot size of opportunities expected to come to the market over the next few months it is considered that a budget of £10 million will enable the Council to bid effectively for opportunities that meet the criteria set out in the Property Investment Strategy, ensure a balanced portfolio and make a significant contribution to the council's income.
- 13 If borrowing to purchase an asset, the overall yield on the acquisition will reduce due to interest charges and the repayment of the loan. These details will be included in the business case to give assurance that the purchase still gives financial benefits to the Council. As a guide to current rates, the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) is offering a 25 year annuity loan at 3.34%. Borrowing at this rate would result in a lower net yield than suggested in the strategy but would still produce significant benefits for our communities.

Treasury Management Strategy

- 14 Council approved the Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 on 17 February 2015 which included a borrowing limit of £5m. If Council approve the additional funding requested above, the borrowing limit will need to increase accordingly.
- 15 Appendix B contains an amendment to the Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 to increase the borrowing limit to £10m.

Key Implications

Financial

As previously stated in this report, the proposals outlined are suggested in order to contribute to the aim of the council becoming more financially self-sufficient as articulated in the approved Corporate Plan.

The council has been debt free for many years so borrowing to finance acquisitions will be a significant change. External advice will be obtained where appropriate to ensure that there is a thorough understanding of the implications and possible accounting treatments of borrowing to purchase any asset.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

A full risk analysis of the Property Investment Strategy was included in the report to Council on 22 July 2014 and reviewed by the Audit Committee on 9 September 2014.

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Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Value for Money and Asset Maintenance

It is suggested that value for money derived from available finances when looked at in conjunction with the Treasury Management Strategy has the ability to be increased if the proposals outlined in this report are adopted.

Conclusions

In acknowledgement of the ongoing reductions in Government Support and the continued low returns on investment of reserves, further investment in the Property Investment Strategy will continue to support the alternative approach as indicated by the approved Corporate Plan.

Members will be updated with more details at future meetings

Appendices

Appendix A – Property Investment Strategy

Appendix B – Amendment to Treasury Management Strategy 2015/16

Background Papers:

[Report to Council 22 July 2014 – Investment Strategy](#)

[Report to Audit Committee 9 September 2014 – Investment Strategy Risk Register](#)

Adrian Rowbotham
Chief Finance Officer

Property Investment Strategy

1. The strategy will consist of a diversified and balanced portfolio of investment assets with regard to the following considerations.
2. Established property investment practice has evolved based on long standing markets for assets in main stream sectors such as Offices, Retail, Industrial and Residential. Investing in these traditional asset categories in a balanced fashion, allows for a lower risk investment when compared to emerging markets such as Student Accommodation, Nursing Homes and Medical Centres.
3. When considering the tenure of an asset, freehold would be preferable to leasehold. Freehold provides for greater levels of security against a leasehold asset that would effectively decrease in value over time. However assets on long leasehold basis may still be suitable for consideration.
4. Whilst properties let to only one tenant may offer an acceptable level of risk, multi-tenanted properties would be favourable as they offer the opportunity to minimise the impact of any one part of the asset being vacant due to tenant default or lease expiry. If assets are occupied by a single tenant, then detailed financial due diligence would be undertaken to ascertain their financial stability.
5. Given the greater market knowledge of the local area, it is suggested that initial investment opportunities are restricted to those within Sevenoaks District.
6. Based on the above considerations and taking into account local market conditions, a suggested lot size of between £1m and £5m is recommended. This is to avoid the lower part of the local market where private high net worth individuals would be seeking to invest and also the high end, where Pension Funds and Life Assurance Funds tend to dominate.
7. Opportunities should be sought that lend themselves to a potential to increase rental income than is currently being realised.
8. A limited number of opportunities that include the potential for development should also be considered.
9. Where sites that are already in the ownership of the Council could be redeveloped in partnership with neighbouring sites, added value can be derived from 'marriage' of the sites. Consideration should be given to Joint Venture (JV) projects that maximise value, with priority given to those which would result in the delivery of assets meeting the investment criteria.
10. It is proposed that external specialist property investment advisors be retained on each transaction, advising on suitability having undertaken detailed pre purchase due diligence, including valuation, risk analysis and lease / title reviews.
11. It is proposed that initially, the Strategic Asset Management and Operational Property Management of the portfolio be delivered from existing resource within the Council's Economic Development and Property Team. There will however be times when specialist external advice is needed and this work will be

commissioned on an 'as required' basis, funded from the income from the assets. This approach is to be reviewed regularly, including ongoing resource requirements, as the portfolio grows.

12. Funding for the acquisition of assets should be reviewed on a case by case basis but could be derived from a number of sources:

- Receipts from previous property disposals.
- Receipts from proposed land / property disposals in future years.
- Reallocation of some of the funds currently held in reserves.
- Borrowing from external lenders – Bank Real Estate Finance, Annuity Funds, Pension Funds.
- Borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board.
- Municipal Bonds Agency.

The commercially sensitive sections of the Property Investment Strategy have been excluded from this document. These were detailed in the exempted information in the report to Council on 22 July 2014. Copies are available to Members only, on request.

AMENDMENT TO TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2015/16

Introduction

- 1 As a consequence of expanding the Property Investment Strategy, it will be necessary to review the annual Treasury Management Strategy. The Strategy for 2015/16 was approved by Council on 17 February 2015.
- 2 The Local Government Act 2003 (the Act) and supporting regulations requires the Council to 'have regard to' the Prudential Code and to set Prudential Indicators for the next three years to ensure that the Council's capital investment plans are affordable, prudent and sustainable.
- 3 The Act therefore requires the Council to set out its treasury strategy for borrowing and to prepare an Annual Investment Strategy (as required by investment guidance issued subsequent to the Act). This sets out the Council's policies for managing its investments and for giving priority to the security and liquidity of those investments.
- 4 Any amendment to the Strategy requires approval by full Council. Whilst the policies for managing investments do not need to change for the time being, those relating to borrowing will need revision.

Capital Prudential Indicators 2015/16 to 2017/18

- 5 The annual Treasury Management Strategy includes three Prudential Indicators relating to borrowing:

The Operational Boundary

- 6 This is the limit beyond which external debt is not normally expected to exceed. In most cases, this would be a similar figure to the CFR, but may be lower or higher depending on the levels of actual debt. The current figures are:

Operational boundary	2014/15 Estimate £000	2015/16 Estimate £000	2016/17 Estimate £000	2017/18 Estimate £000
Debt	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0
Total	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

In light of the proposals for the Property Investment Strategy, it is recommended that this Indicator be amended as follows:

Operational boundary	2014/15 Estimate £000	2015/16 Estimate £000	2016/17 Estimate £000	2017/18 Estimate £000
Debt	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0
Total	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

The Authorised Limit for external debt

- 7 A further key prudential indicator represents a control on the maximum level of borrowing. This represents a limit beyond which external debt is prohibited, and this limit needs to be set or revised by the full Council. It reflects the level of external debt which, while not desired, could be afforded in the short term, but is not sustainable in the longer term.
- 8 This is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003. The Government retains an option to control either the total of all councils' plans, or those of a specific council, although this power has not yet been exercised.
- 9 The current Authorised Limits are:

Authorised Limit	2014/15 Estimate £000	2015/16 Estimate £000	2016/17 Estimate £000	2017/18 Estimate £000
Debt	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000
Other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0
Total	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000

In light of the proposals for the Property Investment Strategy, it is recommended that this Indicator be amended as follows:

Authorised Limit	2014/15 Estimate £000	2015/16 Estimate £000	2016/17 Estimate £000	2017/18 Estimate £000
Debt	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000
Other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0
Total	5,000	10,000	10,000	10,000

Treasury Management Limits on Activity

- 10 There are three debt related treasury activity limits. The purpose of these are to restrain the activity of the treasury function within certain limits, thereby managing risk and reducing the impact of any adverse movement in interest rates. However, if these are set to be too restrictive, they will impair the opportunities to reduce costs and/or improve performance. The indicators are:
 - a. Upper limits on variable interest rate exposure. This identifies a maximum limit for variable interest rates based upon the debt position, net of investments.
 - b. Upper limits on fixed interest rate exposure. This is similar to the previous indicator and covers a maximum limit on fixed interest rates.

c. Maturity structure of borrowing. These gross limits are set to reduce the Council's exposure to large fixed rate sums falling due for refinancing, and are required for upper and lower limits.

11 At the present time, there is no need to change these indicators:

Interest rate exposures	2015/16 %	2016/17 %	2017/18 %
Upper limit for variable interest rate exposure	50%	50%	50%
Upper limit for fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Maturity structure for borrowings:			
Upper limit for under 12 months	100%	100%	100%
Lower limit for under 12 months	0%	0%	0%
Upper limit for over 12 months	100%	100%	100%
Lower limit for over 12 months	0%	0%	0%

Other prudential Indicators

12 Once further property investments have been selected and a requirement to borrow has been identified, changes will be required to Prudential Indicators relating to the Council's Borrowing Need (the Capital Financing Requirement or 'CFR') as well as the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) strategy. Details will be put before Members at the appropriate time.

Policy on borrowing in advance of need

13 Borrowing in advance of need is a recognised tool in any treasury management strategy. It enables forward planning to take advantage of favourable interest rates, rather than being reliant on prevailing interest rates at the actual time the borrowing is required.

14 If any borrowing activity is undertaken, it should be noted that the Council will not borrow more than or in advance of its needs purely in order to profit from the investment of the extra sums borrowed. Any decision to borrow in advance will be within forward approved Capital Financing Requirement estimates, and will be considered carefully to ensure that value for money can be demonstrated and that the Council can ensure the security of such funds.

15 Risks associated with any borrowing in advance activity will be subject to prior appraisal and subsequent reporting through the mid-year or annual reporting mechanism

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Item 7 – Property Disposals Update

The attached report was considered by the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee, relevant minute extract below:

Policy & Performance Advisory Committee – 9 June 2015 (Minute 10)

The Head of Economic Development & Property presented a report which updated Members on the disposal of surplus property assets and sought approval to revised disposal strategies in respect of two properties and approval to dispose of a further property.

It was moved by the Chairman and

Resolved: That, under section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Appendix A to the report, on the ground that likely disclosure of exempt information was involved as defined by paragraph 3 (Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)) as identified in Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Officers tabled further exempt information related to the proposed disposals.

(Cllr. Maskell left the room for the consideration of Land at Croft Road, Westerham and for the vote on whole item).

Members discussed the options detailed in the confidential appendix and it was

Resolved: That it be recommended to Cabinet that

- a) delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal of land at Croft Road, Westerham following the bidding process;
- b) delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal of land at Knole Way, Sevenoaks following the bidding process;
- c) subject to the preference of the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee for option 3 in Appendix A to the report, Cabinet consider the options for the disposal of Woodland at Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown set out in the exempt Appendix A;
- d) subject to the preference of the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee for option 3 in Appendix A to the report, Cabinet consider

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the options for disposal of land at Timberden Farm, Shoreham set out in the exempt Appendix A;

- e) an initial budget of £20,000 from Capital Reserves be approved to appoint architects to prepared development options for the Bevan Place Car Park/Swanley Working Men's Club/16 High Street site; and
- f) a budget of £61,000 from Capital Reserves be approved to enhance the value of sites at: Timberden Farm, Shoreham; Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown; and Knole Way, Sevenoaks prior to disposal

Note: The additional papers tabled at the meeting are attached.

PROPERTY DISPOSALS UPDATE

Cabinet – 16 July 2015

Report of Chief Officer Communities & Business

Status: For Consideration

Also considered by: Policy & Performance Advisory Committee – 9 June 2015

Key Decision: Yes

Executive Summary:

This report updates Members on the disposal of surplus property assets and seeks approval to revised disposal strategies in respect of two properties and approval to dispose of further property

This report supports the Key Aim of Asset Management Plan

Portfolio Holder Cllr Fleming

Contact Officer(s) Mark Bradbury Ext. 7099

Recommendation to the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee

That:

- (a) the Committee consider the options for the disposal of Woodland at Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown set out in the exempt Appendix A and recommend the preferred option to Cabinet;
- (b) the Committee consider the options for disposal of land at Timberden Farm, Shoreham set out in the exempt Appendix A and recommend the preferred option to Cabinet; and
- (c) recommendations (a), (b), (e) and (f) of the recommendation to Cabinet be endorsed.

Recommendation to Cabinet

That:

- (a) delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal of land at Croft Road, Westerham following the bidding process;
-

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-
- (b) delegated authority be given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal of land at Knole Way, Sevenoaks following the bidding process;
 - (c) subject to the views of the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee, Cabinet consider the options for the disposal of Woodland at Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown set out in the exempt Appendix A;
 - (d) subject to the views of the Policy & Performance Advisory Committee, Cabinet consider the options for disposal of land at Timberden Farm, Shoreham set out in the exempt Appendix A;
 - (e) an initial budget of £20,000 from Capital Reserves be approved to appoint architects to prepare development options for the Bevan Place Car Park/Swanley Working Men's Club/16 High Street site; and
 - (f) a budget of £61,000 from Capital Reserves be approved to enhance the value of sites at: Timberden Farm, Shoreham; Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown; and Knole Way, Sevenoaks prior to disposal
-

Reason for recommendation: Disposal of surplus and underperforming assets will generate capital receipts that can be reinvested in higher performing assets in accordance with the Council's approved Property Investment Strategy.

Introduction and Background

- 1 At its meeting on 25 March 2014 the Finance & Resources Advisory Committee recommended to cabinet that they approve the disposal of the following properties:-

Timberden Farm, Shoreham

27 -37 High Street, Swanley

Land at Bevan Place, Swanley

16 High Street, Swanley

Land at Croft Road, Westerham

Woodland at Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown

Land at Viking Way, West Kingsdown

Land at Deanery Road, Crockham Hill

Land adjacent to 12 Knole Way, Sevenoaks

Land adjacent to 56 Shenden Close, Sevenoaks

- 2 Cabinet on 10 April 2014 approved the disposals in principle.
- 3 Progress on the disposals had been slower than intended due to the departure of the Property and Facilities Manager in late 2014 but significant progress is now being made as follows: -

Land at Croft Road, Westerham

- 4 Marketing of this site had been held off pending adoption of the Council's Allocations & Development Plan (ADMP). As this has now been adopted and this site allocated for development, advice has been taken on marketing and suitable firms invited to tender to carry out the marketing.
- 5 Demand for sites of this size is considered to be particularly healthy at the moment and all agents consulted advised that there should be no need to secure planning consent prior to marketing. RPC Land have therefore been appointed and marketing commenced on 13 May. The site is being offered by informal tender with best bids by 25 June. A guide price of 'Offers in the Region of £3,000,000' has been advertised.
- 6 SDC's Housing Team has expressed interest in part of the site being developed as an exemplar, low energy, affordable scheme and Housing Associations are being encouraged to submit bids on that basis. These bids will be considered alongside open market bids.
- 7 The committee is asked to recommend that delegated authority is given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal following the bidding process.

Land at Viking Way and to the rear of 140 Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown

- 8 Advice has been taken from Auctioneers on the likely value of these parcels of land at auction. The larger parcel is landlocked and the smaller parcel of insufficient size on its own to develop. Cabinet subsequently approved the placing of the property at auction with no reserve.
- 9 Prior to placing the property at auction neighbours and the parish council were notified of the intention to sell and interest was received from a number of people interested in bidding. Best bids were therefore invited and a number received.
- 10 The highest bid received was from a neighbouring owner interested in extending an existing garden and providing an alternative access to a property he had already secured planning consent to develop. Following discussion with the Auctioneer and the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources terms were agreed and the sale has now completed.
- 11 A claw back provision has been included meaning that should the land be developed within the next 80 years the council will receive 25% of the uplift in value. The sale price achieved was £23,500.

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The committee is asked to note the disposal of this property.

Land at Deanery Road, Crockham Hill

- 12 Advice was also taken on the likely value of this site at auction. The site is accessed via a single track lane that would need to be widened to allow development and there are restrictive covenants in place preventing development of the site. Westerham Town Council were also asked whether they would support a rural needs study to establish whether residential development could be supported on the site and they responded that they would not.
- 13 The market assessment was therefore based on amenity use and Cabinet agreed to place the property at Auction with a set reserve. Following discussion with neighbours and the Town Council it was, however, agreed to delay putting the property to auction to allow time for the community to formulate a bid for the site.
- 14 A Community Interest Company (CIC) has now been established to acquire the site at a figure which falls within the Auctioneer's valuation range and above the reserve agreed by cabinet. The proposal will also deliver a number of community benefits and following discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Resources, solicitors have been instructed to complete the sale. A restrictive covenant will be imposed preventing use or development of the site for commercial or residential purposes. Details of the sale price are contained in the exempt Appendix A.

The committee is asked to note the disposal of this property.

Land adjacent to 56 Shenden Close, Sevenoaks

- 15 Best bids have been invited for this site and terms agreed with an adjoining owner who will use the land as an extension to his garden. Solicitors are instructed. The agreed price is in excess of the market assessment provided by an independent valuer. A claw back clause has been included meaning that should the land be developed within the next 80 years the council will receive 25% of the uplift in value. Details of the sale price are contained in the exempt Appendix A.
- 16 There was no interest from West Kent Housing Association who own adjacent amenity land.

The committee is asked to note the disposal of this property.

Land Adjacent to 12 Knole Way, Sevenoaks

- 17 Agents have been consulted on the disposal of this site and have advised that the most appropriate route to achieving best value would be to seek offers for the site on a subject to planning basis.
- 18 Agents have now been appointed and the property will be marketed shortly. The guide price is set out in the exempt Appendix A.

- 19 The Knole Paddock Residents Association have been made aware of the proposed disposal and are supportive in principle of the development of a single family residence on the site.

The committee is asked to recommend that delegated authority is given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal following the bidding process.

27 – 37 High Street, Swanley (Former Meeting Point)

- 20 Vacant possession of this site has been secured and outline planning consent granted for redevelopment to provide c. 385 square metres of commercial (retail or office) space at ground floor with 14 flats (12 x 1 bedroom, 2 x 2 bedroom) apartments on the first and second floors.
- 21 Proposals for development or disposal of the site will be prepared alongside those for the Bevan Place Car Park and 16 High Street Swanley and brought before members for consideration shortly.

Bevan Place Car Park and 16 High Street, Swanley

- 22 Following the recent acquisition of the Swanley Working Men's Club disposal of the adjoining Bevan Place car park and 16 High Street has been put on hold.
- 23 Proposals for the development or disposal of the combined site will be brought before members for consideration shortly.

The Committee is asked to recommend approval of an initial budget of £20,000 to appoint architects to prepare development options for the Bevan Place Car Park/Swanley Working Mens Club/16 High Street site.

Woodland at Hever Avenue, West Kingsdown

- 24 This land had previously been identified for disposal to West Kingsdown Parish Council however at Cabinet on 10 April 2014 it was agreed that advice on the value of the site should be sought and if appropriate the property offered for sale by auction.
- 25 Options for disposal of the site are set out in the exempt Appendix A.

The committee is asked to consider the options and recommend the preferred option.

Timberden Farm, Shoreham

- 26 Timberden Farm was extensively marketed in 2014 in 4 lots or as a whole. No offers were received for the whole and no offers or combination of offers were received at a level which could be recommended. It was agreed that the property would be withdrawn from the market and remarketed this summer.
- 27 In the meantime the previous tenant has vacated and a new short term (sheep) grazing license entered into to keep the grass short.

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- 28 Options for disposal of the site are now presented in exempt Appendix A.

The committee is asked to consider the options and recommend the preferred option.

Additional Land Identified for Disposal

Land adjacent to Shacklands Cottages, Badgers Mount

- 29 The council owns an area of woodland in Badgers Mount adjacent to the M25 motorway. This land lies outside of the areas of woodland managed as an amenity for the public.
- 30 Part of the woodland, edged green on the attached plan has been sold on a long lease to one adjoining owner. That owner is now interested in acquiring further land and their neighbour is also interested. Between them they are interested in acquiring all of the land.
- 31 It is proposed that all other adjoining property owners are approached to establish their interest in the land at the asking price set out in exempt Appendix A. Subject to the interest received it is proposed that the land is sold in appropriately sized parcels with the freehold of the leasehold land simultaneously transferred to the leaseholder.

The committee is asked to recommend that delegated authority is given to the Portfolio Holder for Policy & Performance in consultation with the Head of Economic Development and Property to approve the terms of a disposal following further negotiation.

Conclusions

- 32 Members of the Policy and Performance Advisory Committee are asked to note the progress being made in disposing of surplus or underperforming assets and support the recommendations for further action outlined above.

Key Implications

Financial

Disposal of these sites will deliver capital receipts to the council. In order to enhance the value of sites for disposal and where appropriate secure planning consent

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

Resources from the Council's legal team are and will continue to be needed to complete the disposal process.

Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

Appendices

Appendix A - Exempt information on disposal and marketing terms.

Appendix B - Site Plan of Land adjacent to Shacklands Cottages, Shoreham

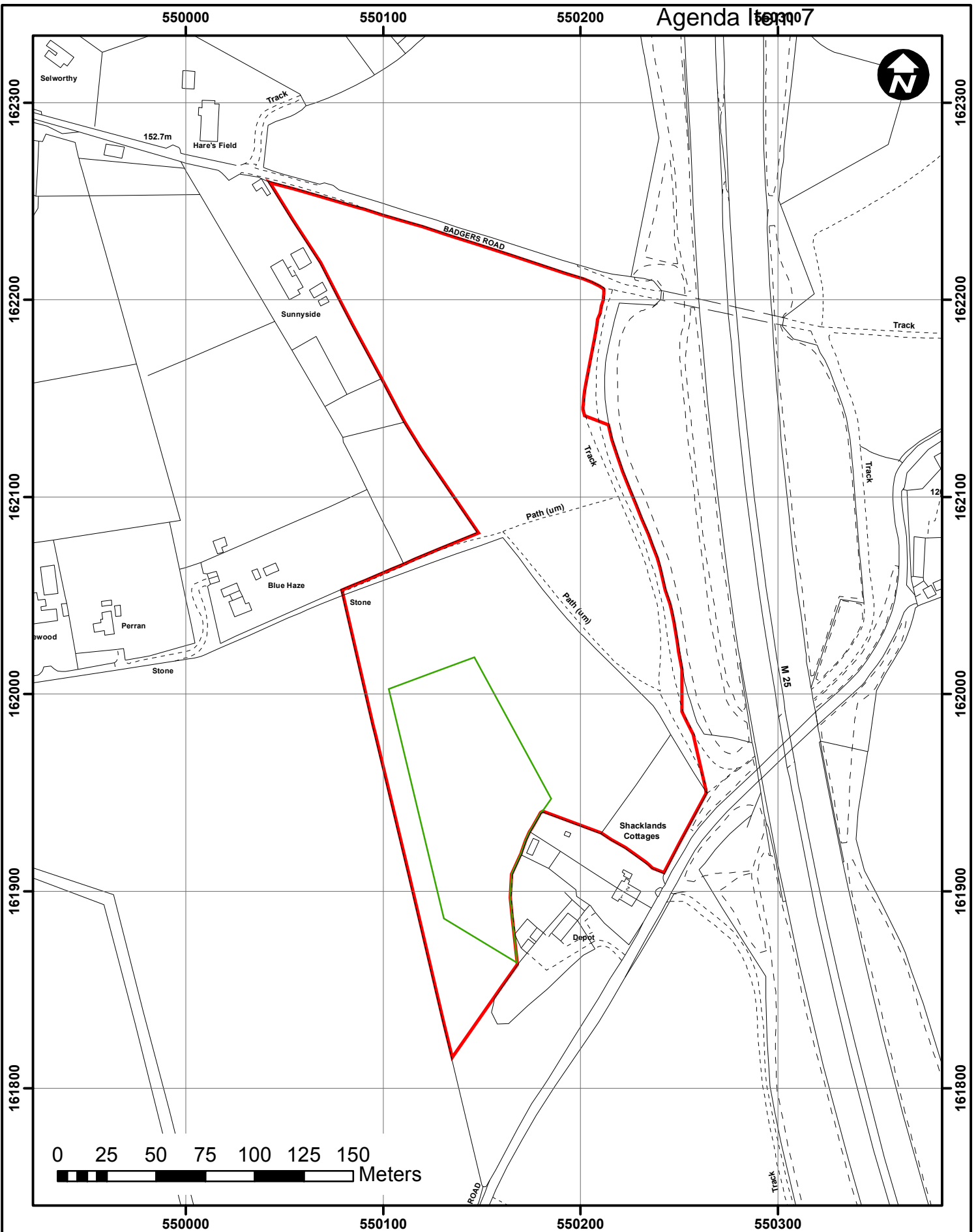
Appendix C - Exempt information on disposal and marketing terms which was tabled at Policy & Performance Advisory Committee

Background Papers:

None

Mark Bradbury
Head of Economic Development & Property

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Ordnance Survey 100019428

Title Information Plan

Shacklands Cottage Adjacent

Scale: 1:2,500
Date: May 2015

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By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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