

## Responses to questions from Councillors requiring a written response

WQ1

### Written question to be asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Schools and Communications at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 8 March 2021

Can the Portfolio Holder provide a breakdown of Council owned property (excluding housing stock) sold since November 2020, on a property by property basis and provide the sale consideration received against the last recorded book value?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

In response the table below provides the detail requested: Assets sold between 01.11.2020 and 09.03.2021

As you will note the book value in some cases cannot be provided, the reason for this is that often assets which are located adjacent or in close proximity to each other are grouped together to be valued for accounting purposes, purely for reasons of efficiency. This means that we would not always have individual asset values.

In addition, not every asset is valued every year as they are valued on a 5 year rolling programme hence why the date of the book valuation has been provided.

<b>Address</b>	<b>Book Value £ (date of valuation)</b>	<b>Sale Price £</b>	<b>Comments</b>
14 Gervase Gardens, Clifton	Valuation for 1, 2 & 4-40 Gervase Gardens (unable to split), value £0.023m (31-Mar-20)	2,000	Book Value forms part of a larger asset group, no individual asset value
15 Gervase Gardens, Clifton	Valuation for 1, 2 & 4-40 Gervase Gardens (unable to split), value £0.023m (31-Mar-20)	3,000	Book Value forms part of a larger asset group, no individual asset value
112 to 128 Derby Road, Nottingham	Unable to split 62-82, 88-94 & 106-128 Derby Road assets grouped, combined value £1.509m (31-Mar-20)	1,300,000	Book Value forms part of a larger asset group, no individual asset value
106 Derby Road, Nottingham	Unable to split 62-82, 88-94 & 106-128 Derby Road assets grouped, combined value £1.509m (31-Mar-20)	48,000	Book Value forms part of a larger asset group, no individual asset value
Trent Farm, Long Eaton (paddock)	£0.243m (31-Mar-20)	40,000	Book Value forms part of a larger asset group, no individual asset value
Glaisdale Dr East, Nottingham	£0.290m (31-Mar-17)	570,000	Market has moved significantly in last 3 yrs since Book Value set
Land at Crocus Street, Nottingham	£0.162m (31-Mar-20)	140,000	Further overage receipt anticipated
60 Carlton Road, Nottingham	Unable to split 60, 62 & 64 Carlton Road assets	202,000	Book Value forms part of a larger asset group, no

	grouped, combined value £1.000m (31-Mar-20)		individual asset value
5 Holgate, Clifton	£0.082m (31-Mar-20)	202,000	Very strong bidding in auction
289 Main Street, Bulwell	£0.082m (31-Mar-20)	100,000	
293 Main Street, Bulwell	£0.030m (31-Mar-20)	50,000	
308a Colwick Low Rd, Nottingham	£0.092m (31-Mar-20)	390,000	Very strong bidding in auction
Part of former Denewood Centre, Denewood Crescent, Nottingham	£0.770m (31-Mar-20)	760,000	

## WQ2

**Written question to be asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Regeneration, Schools and Communications at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 8 March 2021**

The Portfolio Holder will be aware of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre's repeated statements about the freezing of non-essential Council spend. Could he therefore provide a breakdown of the top 10 items of non-essential spend cut from his Portfolio since the emergency budget last year?

Councillor David Mellen replied as follows:

In 2017/18 the Council implemented a range of management actions and spending controls to mitigate potential overspends and these remain in place today. These have included a range of measures such as reducing contingency balances, reviews of earmarked reserves, reduced revenue contribution to the capital programme, vacancy controls, stop to non-essential spend, reductions to maintenance spend and restrictions on hospitality, training, travel and conferences.

Budget Managers are accountable for delivering their services within budget and are responsible for ensuring that the spending controls are adhered to.

Expenditure within the Finance system records type of expenditure but the categorisation between essential or non-essential spend will be different depending on the service, examples are, training for one area may be non-essential but for another service essential in a particular circumstance and the holding of vacancies aligned to grant funded services would impact on the maximisation in the use of grants and the impact on the outcomes associated with the grant conditions.

Budget Managers continue to forecast monthly capturing any underspends from the controls that are applicable to the service they are providing.

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**WQ3**

**Written question to be asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 8 March 2021**

Could the Portfolio Holder provide a breakdown of the number of empty commercial properties in the City Centre on a month by month basis from March 2020 to February 2021 and what this equates to in terms of lost rates revenue?

Councillor Sam Webster replied as follows:

We do not measure vacancies in the city centre on a month by month basis. The most recent reliable data is just before the pandemic, which showed a vacancy rate in the city as follows: Total Retail Units Surveyed 1311, 200 vacant which is a 15.26% vacancy rate. However, these figures include Broadmarsh. If we remove Broadmarsh units which are 'under development' a more accurate figure is 1311 – minus 69 units under = 1242 total surveyed, with 131 vacant so a rate of 10.55% vacancy.

We know that there have been many businesses choosing to give up their leases or cease trading during the global pandemic. It must be noted however, that until shops reopen as part of the Government's Roadmap, we are unable to provide an accurate figure.

With regards to business rates, the owner of the property is still liable for rates, so the rates income base line will not have changed unless there is a change of use and a re-valuation. This is unlikely due to the valuation office being constrained in their working.

It is worth noting however that all retail, leisure and hospitality businesses had zero rated rates bills for April 2020 -March 2021, as a result of Government policy related to the pandemic.

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**WQ4**

**Written question to be asked by Councillor Andrew Rule of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Culture and IT at the meeting of the City Council to be held on 8 March 2021**

The Portfolio Holder will be aware of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Growth and the City Centre's repeated statements about the freezing of non-essential Council spend. Could he therefore provide a breakdown of the top 10 items of non-essential spend cut from this Portfolio since the emergency budget last year?

Councillor Dave Trimble replied as follows:

In 2017/18 the Council implemented a range of management actions and spending controls to mitigate potential overspends and these remain in place today. These have included a range of measures such as reducing contingency balances, reviews of earmarked reserves, reduced revenue contribution to the capital programme,

vacancy controls, stop to non-essential spend, reductions to maintenance spend and training, travel and conferences.

Budget Managers are accountable for delivering their services within budget and are responsible for ensuring that the spending controls are adhered to.

Following the emergency budget set and ahead of the budgets agreed for 2021/22, in addition to the measures highlighted above, the following temporary spending mitigations were also implemented which included:

- reduction in cleaning and chemical supplies purchased due to the continued lock down of leisure centres;
- reduction across buildings of internal cleaning whilst not operational;
- deferment of inspections where these were not health and safety critical;
- cancellation of events and associated marketing spend;
- reduction of horticultural work on park sites or for detailed floral bed planting schemes;
- reduction in book purchases during the lockdown for libraries;
- deferment where possible of any other discretionary expenditure items across the service that were not contractual.

Expenditure within the Finance system records type of expenditure but the categorisation between essential or non-essential spend will be different depending on the service, examples are, training for one area may be non-essential but for another service essential in a particular circumstance and spend associated with income generation where there is a positive budget impact.

Budget Managers continue to forecast monthly capturing any underspends from the controls that are applicable to the service they are providing.

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