

ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL

DATE	13 November 2018
REPORT OF	Director – Communities (Statutory Scrutiny Officer)
SUBJECT	Tracking the Recommendations of the Economy Scrutiny Panel
STATUS	Open

CONTRIBUTION TO THE COUNCIL PLAN/STRATEGIC AIMS

The scrutiny panels act as a reviewing mechanism for decisions made relating to the strategic policy, performance and resources required to deliver the ambitions of the council and the strategic partnership. The aim of the scrutiny process is to make sure decision making is robust by providing constructive challenge. This contributes to the Council being effective and efficient, and therefore it is integral to the delivery of the Council Plan.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Each scrutiny panel monitors the progress made on their recommendations through a tracking table, which is included as an appendix of this report.

MATTER(S) FOR CONSIDERATION

Members are asked to look at the progress against the recommendations and agree to sign off any recommendations that have been completed or are no longer considered to be an efficient use of resources, or where priorities have changed.

1. BACKGROUND AND ISSUES

- 1.1 Each scrutiny panel has a standard agenda item to check progress against the recommendations they have previously made.
- 1.2 Members are asked to look at the progress against the recommendations and agree to sign off any recommendations that have been completed, so that they can be removed from the table. It would also be effective to sign off any recommendations that have not been completed but which are no longer considered to be an efficient use of resources, or where priorities have changed.
- 1.3 Appendix 1 of this report lists the recommendations previously made by this panel and the Regeneration, Environment and Housing Scrutiny Panel which fall within the terms of reference of this Economy Scrutiny Panel.

2. RISKS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 Risk assessments will already have been carried out on the reports that these recommendations have come from.

2.2 Any actions which the council may undertake as a result of recommendations made by scrutiny will be the subject of further reports, which will include risk assessment(s) by the author(s) concerned.

3. OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

3.1 Not applicable to this report.

4. REPUTATION AND COMMUNICATIONS CONSIDERATIONS

4.1 The panel's tracking report demonstrates that the panel monitors progress on its recommendations and required actions. This report further demonstrates the breadth of matters considered by scrutiny.

5. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

5.1 There are no financial considerations included within this report, beyond scrutiny's enhanced future role in monitoring delivery of the council's budget and medium term financial plan.

6 MONITORING COMMENTS

6.1 In the opinion of the author, this report does not contain recommended changes to policy or resources (people, finance or physical assets). As a result no monitoring comments have been sought from the Council's Monitoring Officer (legal), Section 151 Officer (finance) or Human Resources.

7. WARD IMPLICATIONS

7.1 Potentially impacts on all wards.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Minutes from the Economy Scrutiny panel
<http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/committees/committees.aspx?commid=69>

9. CONTACT OFFICER

9.1 Anne Campbell, Scrutiny and Committee Advisor
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HELEN ISAACS
Director – Communities
(Statutory Scrutiny Officer)

**TRACKING OF RECOMMENDATIONS –
ECONOMY SCRUTINY PANEL**

DATE	RECOMMENDATIONS MADE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS/COMMENTS
<p>March 2013</p>	<p><u>From tracking of recommendations – speed limit/road safety select committee</u> That the majority of this stretch of the A18 Barton Street should be reduced to 50mph. However, the original proposal be amended to include a 40mph speed limit on the A18 Barton Street between the Beelsby and Hatcliffe turn offs. Scrutiny requested that further investigation was done in the Waterdell location to include making the existing advisory 40mph statutory and considering measures at the Barnoldby – Le-Beck and Beelsby junctions.</p>	<p>Mark Scarr, Deputy Head of Highways and transport - ENGIE / Ange Blake, Director of Economy and Growth</p>	<p><u>Position at October 2018</u> NELC has been awarded funding of £2.822m by the Department for Transport (DfT) to undertake a series of safety improvements to the A18 Barton Street between Laceby and Ludborough in Lincolnshire.</p> <p>Cabinet approval was received in August 2018. Preliminary design has been completed and options are currently being evaluated and considered with regard to finalising the proposed scheme.</p>
<p>6 Sept 2016</p>	<p><u>SPREH.21 – Forward Plan Items</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homes and Community Agency Smarter Neighbourhoods • NEL Local Transport Plan Update (quarterly) • Energy Services Company • Temporary Stopover for Gypsy & Travellers • Community Stadium • Housing Strategy (December 2017) • Smarter Neighbourhood Review • Community Interest Company–empty homes – (December 2017) • Public toilets 	<p>Anne Campbell, Scrutiny Advisor and Appropriate Officer</p>	<p>Retain in tracking:</p> <p>Items to be circulated or added to the agenda when available.</p> <p>Please note : At the request of the Chair, and in response to press coverage, a briefing on the latest position relating to Gypsy and Travellers’ temporary stopover site to the November panel meeting. Appendix 2 (copy attached)</p>

DATE	RECOMMENDATIONS MADE	RESPONSIBLE	PROGRESS/COMMENTS
14 November 2017	<p><u>SPE.50 - CAR PARKING STRATEGY</u> A strategy delivery plan and timely detail of emerging work streams to be presented to the panel as the delivery of the strategy progresses. In any case, the strategy to be reviewed by the panel after a period of twelve months. (SPE.54 also refers).</p>	Damien Jaines-White, Head of Strategy and Programme Development	<p><u>Position at September 2018</u> A high level action plan had been agreed with the Portfolio Holder for Energy, Environment and Transport. Scrutiny would be kept up to date with progress. Various reports emanating from the strategy were presented to the scrutiny panel on 11 September 2018.</p> <p>A summary report to update the panel on all elements of delivering the strategy will be presented to the panel, this is likely to be at the January 2019 meeting.</p>
18 September 2018	<p><u>SPE.40 - Engie Performance August 2018: regarding business units</u> The panel requested further information about the increase in service charges and the impact this may have on business unit occupancy.</p>	Sharon Wroot, Director Resources and Governance / Wendy Fisher, Capital and Assets Programme Manager	<p><u>Complete:</u> Briefing note to next meeting; 13 November 2018 Appendix 3 (copy attached)</p>
18 September 2018	<p><u>SPE.41 - Engie Annual Partnership Report: regarding Victoria Mills</u> The panel requested information on potential ventures, financial strains, current position, options and next steps for the Victoria Mills building.</p>	Ange Blake, Director of Economy and Growth	<p><u>Complete:</u> Briefing note to next meeting; 13 November 2018 Appendix 4 (copy attached)</p>

End.

The **Economy** scrutiny panel have asked to monitor progress on the following issues. This briefing contains the latest position as at **13 November 2018**.

Gypsy and Traveller – Designated Stopping Place

Context

A Designated Stopping Place is an authorised site that can be used as a temporary stopping place for members of the Gypsy and Traveller community who are travelling through North East Lincolnshire. The most recent Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment for North East Lincolnshire, carried out in 2014, found that 15 temporary pitches are needed if the borough is to fulfil the objectively assessed need.

Fifteen pitches will provide space for 30 caravans and these could be placed in one location or split across two or three, depending on the shape and size of the site. There is a daily charge for anyone using such a site and the maximum length of stay is 14 days.

It was identified that provision of a Designated Stopping Place (DSP) would enable the Council, working in partnership with the Police, to better manage illegal encampments and related issues as this would be a temporary site designated for use during the traditional travelling season and would restrict visitors to one location with facilities provided and managed, rather than negotiating ad hoc camps across the area or creating a permanent Transit Site with block facilities. The minimum requirement for the size of a site is 0.145 hectares (1400m²).

Previous Update

The progress of the project was fully captured at the Economy Scrutiny Panel session of 26 June 2018. The report from this meeting can be found at the following link:

<https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/4.-Tracking-the-Recommendations-of-the-Scrutiny-Panel-1.pdf>

Progress – (a full chronology of the process can be found at Appendix A)

Following the June meeting of the Economy Scrutiny Panel, the site shortlist of potential Gypsy and Traveller DSP sites had been reduced to a final total of **6** sites (comprising of **2** Council owned and **4** privately owned sites. The next stage of the process required further consultation with internal stakeholders before a period of public consultation.

Further Investigation - Planning

The shortlist of **6** sites was then investigated further to understand availability. **4** of the sites were in private ownership and landowners indicated that they had no intention to sell their site for the purpose of providing a DSP. These were removed leaving only **2** sites shortlisted.

The project team agreed that sites previously removed because the land was due to be utilised for 'known future developments' would be reconsidered as temporary sites (i.e. utilised before the future development took place). A delegation of the project team met with planning colleagues who suggested that an additional site previously removed for future development could be included in the shortlist on a temporary basis. Planning colleagues also suggested the removal of one of the Council owned sites shortlisted as well as consultation with another external stakeholder on their land. The project team agreed with these recommendations.

Further consideration was then given to sites which were submitted after the deadline for the 'Call for Sites'. Three sites were submitted late; one of which was deemed unsuitable by planning. The

remaining two sites were added to the shortlist pending further consultation. An additional external stakeholder suggested one site which was added to the shortlist pending further investigation. Another site suggested by planners was also added to the shortlist pending further investigation.

This resulted in the shortlist once again totalling **6** sites.

Further Investigation – Economy and Growth

The project team agreed that further consultation with internal colleagues from Economy and Growth would be required in order to understand whether the remaining **6** sites would be suitable for use as a DSP. Colleagues from Economy and Growth suggested that **4** sites should be removed from the shortlist for a variety of reasons such as ongoing regeneration projects and future housing developments.

The project team agreed with these recommendations and the site shortlist was thus reduced to **2** sites.

Further Investigation – Consultation with Landowner

A delegation of the project met with the landowners of one of the sites listed in the site shortlist to understand whether it would be suitable to use their land. The landowners expressed that they were not interested in utilising their land for this purpose and thus the site was removed from the site shortlist.

The shortlist of sites was therefore reduced to **1** site.

Technical Assessment – October 2018

Following discussions with a neighbouring authority it was agreed that the final site shortlisted would be shared for another phase of technical assessment. The site did not feature in the previous shortlist which meant technical assessment was required in order to conform to the process followed thus far. This technical assessment stage began on 9 October 2018 for a period of 3 weeks ending on 30 October 2018.

The technical assessment period is confidential however information regarding the site was leaked by an unknown source and became public knowledge. This resulted in a lot of interest from the public particularly in the area in proximity to the site. However, at this stage, no decision was taken and the aim of the technical assessment was to understand viability / suitability of the site. Members of the public were provided with an email inbox in order for them to submit their views however these views would be considered at the public consultation stage if this was reached.

The stakeholders who provided a response to the site shortlist were as follows:

Planning – East Lindsey District Council;	Planning – North East Lincolnshire Council;	Planning Policy – North East Lincolnshire Council;
Conservation - North East Lincolnshire Council;	Historic England;	Highways England;
Environment Agency;	Anglian Water;	Humberside Fire and Rescue Service;
Highways - North East Lincolnshire Council;	Drainage and Coastal Defence – North East Lincolnshire Council;	Operations - North East Lincolnshire Council;

Estates and Valuations - North East Lincolnshire Council;	Pollution Control – North East Lincolnshire Council;	Lincs Inspire;
Neighbourhood Operations.- North East Lincolnshire Council	Doncaster East Internal Drainage Board	Environmental Health – East Lindsey District Council

The site was considered to be unsuitable by technical stakeholders due to a variety of issues including viability of access and viability of providing services to the site. The decision was therefore taken to remove the site from the shortlist.

Recommendations/ Next Steps

The removal of this site from the overall shortlist represents the final piece of land which has been identified by the project team in this search. The current process has now concluded, therefore, and all previously considered sites have been discounted.

The project team will reconvene to consider the next steps and devise a new process in order to address the commitment of the Council to meet the provision of a site as defined in the Local Plan. The search for a viable site will continue and the project team will continue to engage with the gypsy traveller community, local authorities and technical experts throughout.

New and innovative solutions will require consideration as part of this next stage of the process in order to identify an available, suitable and deliverable site.

Contact Officer: Wendy Fisher, Capital and Assets Programme Manager – Tel: 01472 323132

If you require any further information please contact the named officer or alternatively,

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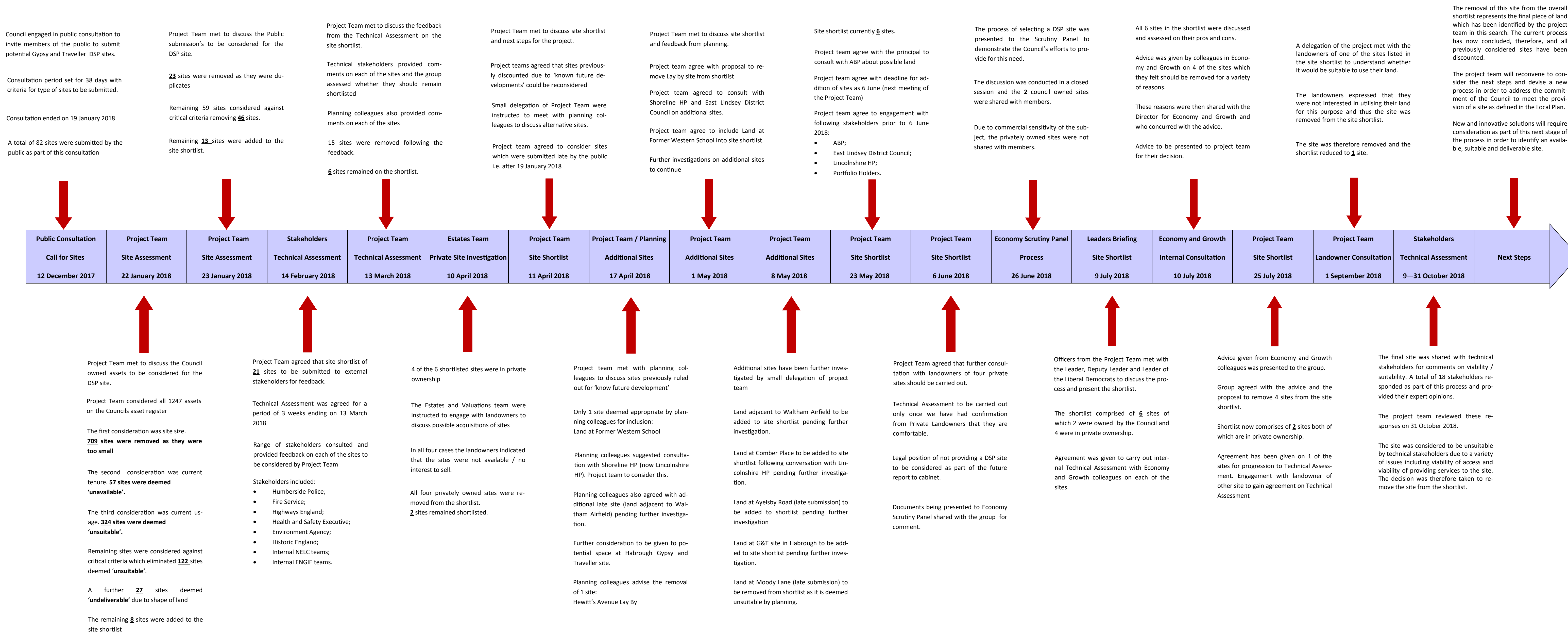
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Gypsy and Traveller Designated Stopping Place (DSP) - Project Chronology

Project Team: Assets, Estates, Grounds Maintenance, Legal, Strategic Commissioning Lead—Shared Services & Commercial Development, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Community Assets Governance and Tourism, Humberside Police, Strategic Housing, Spatial Planning, Communications / Consultation and Engagement.



The **Economy** scrutiny panel have asked to monitor progress on the following issues. This briefing contains the latest position as at **25 October 2018**.

Business Centre Service Charge Recovery and Wider Review

Background

A review of the Business Centre service charge was carried out in 2016 which proposed changes to ensure compliance with industry standards and enable accurate recovery of costs. A further review of the portfolio was undertaken in 2017 with a number of recommendations approved by Cabinet in February 2018 to guarantee the long term sustainability of the portfolio.

The portfolio was assessed as a portfolio and individually by site to identify demand, use, financial sustainability and current condition. A number of recommendations were adopted to provide a fit for purpose portfolio which commenced with the changes to the service charge costs in April 2018. Further recommendations outlined in the wider review considered future management arrangements including more robust leasing arrangements, options for the disposal of non-strategic sites and potential development and improvement projects. The implementation plan outlines the workstream activities to ensure the delivery of the recommendations by 2021.

Progress

The 1st phase of the revised service charge recovery commenced on the 1st April 2018, the final increase is scheduled in April 2019. Occupancy levels, business activity within the portfolio and enquiry data have been tracked against the previous year to identify the effects of the service charge increase. Since the service charge recovery was implemented, 14 new businesses have moved into the portfolio on full recovery costs. The number of enquiries has remained consistent in the first 7 months of the year, averaging 5 a month. There are currently 8 active enquires with 40 businesses on the waiting list, 36 for light industrial units, 1 office and 3 café/restaurant.

Occupancy Business Centre's

	April	May	June	July	August	September	October
2017	89.51%	90.26%	90.64%	90.64%	88.76%	87.64%	89.51%
2018	86.52%	90.64%	91.01%	87.64%	88.39%	88.01%	87.27%
	-2.99%	0.38%	0.37%	-3.00%	-0.37%	0.37%	-2.24%

Business Movement

	Business Downsized	Business Expansion	Relocation out of NEL	Business Ceased Trading
April–Oct 2017	6	5	3	11
April–Oct 2018	5	2	2	4
	-1	-3	-1	-7

Business Centre – Wider Review update

Monthly highlight reports are submitted to the project board to monitor the stages and progress of the project. The project has 6 key workstreams to achieve the recommendations identified in the wider review:

Workstream 1 – Feasibility Studies for expansion opportunities

The commission of feasibility surveys to understand the required investment to improve the Business Centre offer. This will include improvements to condition, improvements to the sites and expansion where possible.

Workstream 2 – Capital Service Statement for portfolio improvements

On completion of the feasibility surveys, the production and submission of CSS to seek approval of capital budget to undertake the recommended improvements to the portfolio.

Workstream 3 – Disposal of non-strategic sites

To consider the disposal of Centre's underperforming in terms of commercial return.

Workstream 4 – Resourcing and Marketing

Resourcing – A review of resources was completed to maximise customer service provision. As a result from July 2017 Centre's operational hours were realigned to ensure consistency and reflect other Council buildings. In September 2017 staffing structures were revised to improve reception cover at the Innovation Centre and assigned a dedicated assistant to the non-managed sites to improve tenant engagement.

Marketing - A marketing plan is currently being formulated for 2018-2021 to review current marketing provisions and identify specific marketing activity with further consideration required to fully rebrand the portfolio and assign a dedicated marketing officer.

Workstream 5 – Transition to standard lease agreements

Implementation plan drafted with a work activity programme for the Centre's remaining in the portfolio. 170 tenants to be transferred from Tenancy at Will to standard leases by April 2021.

Workstream 6 – Energy Efficiency Opportunities

The review of the business Centre portfolio to identify and Energy Conservation Measures (ECMs) which may be introduced to make the properties more sustainable, improve the energy efficient and reduce running costs.

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