

**HITCHIN AREA COMMITTEE  
11 OCTOBER 2022**

**\*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

**TITLE OF INFORMATION NOTE : Churchgate Shopping Centre update**

INFORMATION NOTE OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR - ENTERPRISE

EXECUTIVE MEMBER EXECUTIVE MEMBER FOR ENTERPRISE AND ARTS

PRIORITY SUSTAINABILITY AND A BRIGHTER FUTURE TOGETHER

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 To provide Members an update on the recent acquisition of the Churchgate Shopping Centre

**2. INFORMATION TO NOTE**

- 2.1 The Council has for over twenty years explored a number of developer led opportunities to redevelop the Churchgate Shopping Centre In Hitchin. However, none of these proposals have proceeded. There have been many reasons why they have not succeeded, however, one of the key reasons was that although the Council was the Land Owner of a significant proportion of the potential site, it was not the owner of the Head Lease to the shopping centre.
- 2.2 The Council acquired the Churchgate Shopping Centre on 1 August 2022. Since purchasing the centre the Council has met with the managing agent (Brown and Lee) to discuss the current rent arrears and the condition of the building with regards health and safety and repair and maintenance work that were identified as part of the due diligence when acquiring this asset. The Council and its agent are in the process of putting together a work programme to ensure these items are undertaken.
- 2.3 The Council's long-term aspiration of the shopping centre is to regenerate this area. To undertake this the Council will form a project board which will be responsible for investigating this site and to explore what is possible. As part of this the Council has recently approved the commencement of this project and will be holding its first Project Board meeting during the week commencing 10 November 2022.
- 2.4 A report will be presented to Full Council on 19 January 2023 setting out the short, medium and long term approach for the asset and how the project will be managed. This will include a draft project plan and draft communications plan which will outline how the Council will consult with the public.

**3. NEXT STEPS**

- 3.1 To ensure Councillors and the public are kept up to date on the progress of this site and the project, regular updates will be provided to this committee.

**4. APPENDICES**

- 4.1 None

**5. CONTACT OFFICERS**

5.1 Steve Crowley, Service Director – Enterprise, ([steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk](mailto:steve.crowley@north-herts.gov.uk) /ext 4211)

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 None