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## Report of the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development

### Scrutiny Board (Central & Corporate Functions)

Date: 10<sup>TH</sup> January 2011

Subject: Void Property Process

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**Electoral Wards Affected:**

**Specific Implications For:**

Equality and Diversity

Community Cohesion

Narrowing the Gap

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November 2010, Councillor Chastney requested Scrutiny on the Council's treatment of sites surplus to requirements. This matter was raised at North West Inner Area Committee at its meeting on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2010. Though the matter initially regarded the former Royal Park School, concerns were raised more broadly about asset management. An extract of the relevant minute of that meeting states

“ Members expressed concern at the Council's perceived inaction, not only in this case, but in other similar cases, where empty buildings were seemingly simply left to deteriorate until, ultimately, demolition was the only solution. It was suggested that a Scrutiny Board Inquiry or Internal Audit inquiry was necessary to investigate the Council's policy and alleged poor track record, and to effect change.”

1.2 At its December meeting, members of this Board agreed to receive a paper from the Acting Chief Officer, Corporate Property Management outlining the current void management process for properties declared surplus to services operational requirements. This report is attached as Appendix 1.

1.3 Whilst agreeing that any inquiry would focus on policy and operational performance, rather than specific individual sites, an invitation was extended to Members of North West Inner Area Members to contribute to the initial discussions.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are asked to;

- (i) Receive and discuss the report of the Acting Chief Officer, Corporate Property Management.
- (ii) Undertake any further investigations as appropriate

### Background Papers

Minutes of NW Inner Area Committee - 28<sup>th</sup> October 2010