COMMITTEE:	**SCRUTINY**
DATE:	**11 NOVEMBER 2002**
SUBJECT:	**PROPERTY ISSUES**
REPORT OF:	**ACTING CORPORATE PROPERTY OFFICER**
Ward(s):	N/A
Purpose:	INFORMATION
Contact:	Mike Merchant, Acting Corporate Property Officer, Telephone 01323 415261 or internally on extension 5261.
Recommendations:	The Committee are to consider actions arising from the report.

1.0	**<u>Background</u>**
1.1	The Committee have requested an update on Property issues under the following headings 1. Progress on implementing Best Value Action Plan and Asset Management Plan 2. Staffing issues 3. Not for profit rents 4. Downland issues

1.2	The Legal and Property Services Section has now been divided into the Legal Services Division and the Estates Division. Mike Merchant has been made Acting Head of Estates and has the title Acting Corporate Property Officer. The stated aim of the Division as published on the Your Council/Departments /Estates Website is "The Estates Division are responsible for the overall management of Council owned land and buildings. They prepare and administer the Asset Management Plan and assist building managers to maintain and use their buildings and land to the best advantage."
2.0	**Property Issues**
2.1	**Best Value Improvement Plan -** Progress on implementing the improvement plan was reported to the Best Value Review Board on 23rd September 2002 and although further progress is being made it is too soon to report on improvements since that date.
2.2	**Asset Management Plan (AMP) -** An Action Plan has been drawn up by the Estates Manager to ensure that the improvements and monitoring issues raised by the AMP are being addressed. A copy of the Action Plan Summary is attached as Appendix A. The first priority is to implement means of obtaining appropriate information for the completion of the five Property Performance Indicators (pPIs) for next year's report. It is also essential that issues raised by this year's pPIs are addressed and improvements made.
2.3	**Staffing Issues – The Division currently comprises** Mike Merchant – Architect – Acting Corporate Property Officer Peter Holland - Architectural Assistant – currently working on DDA issues Simon Burton – Architectural Technician - working on Downland issues Joy Ward – Personal Assistant/ Admin Assistant – Part Time 25 hrs Mike Reid – REID & DEAN – consultant – Estates Manager. Since the failed attempt to enlist a new Head of Property Services, Mike Reid has been acting as Estates Manager and his commercial acumen and property management skills have been very useful in

2.4	**Not For Profit Rents - Mike Reid has prepared a review of not for profit rents to establish current levels of hidden grant aid.** **A copy is attached as Appendix B**
2.5	**Downland Issues - A report on the Downland Property Portfolio and its current management is being prepared at the request of Mike Reid. This will take the form of a comprehensive review, identifying the location and legal status of all downland property and will include maps and photographs. A Commentary on Opportunities and Sustainability of the Downland Estate is attached as Appendix C**

3.0	**Consultations** The Downland Report has been compiled in co-operation with Mike Smith, the Downland, Trees and Woodland Manager, Richard Horne for Insurance information and Pete Backler for budget information.
4.0	**Implications covering Human Resource, Environmental, Financial, Youth and Anti-Poverty Implications** The Staffing Issues have Human Resource implications. Downland issues have Environmental and financial implications.
5.0	**Summary** **N/A**
Mike Merchant RIBA **ACTING CORPORATE PROPERTY OFFICER**	
Background Papers: The Background Papers used in compiling this report were as follows: Best Value Improvement Plan for Corporate Land and Buildings – Mike Merchant – Ext.5261 Asset Management Plan – Mike Reid – Ext. 5264 Not For Profit Rents Review – Mike Reid – Ext. 5264 Downland Management Report. – Simon Burton – Ext. 5256 To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.	
(mjm/reports/scrutiny report 10-02)	