

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Date: 18 February 2016

Subject: Governance and Development Management

Portfolio Holder: Councillor J Philip

Recommending:

That the report of the Governance and Development Management Portfolio Holder be noted.

Legal Services

Early in December the Council was successful in respect of two prosecutions relating to unauthorised works carried out to Grade 2 Listed Buildings in The Street, Willingale. One prosecution related to the removal of two bay windows and the construction of an extension which resulted in a fine of £8,000 for the owner together with an order to pay the Council's prosecution costs. The other related to the removal and replacement of windows resulting in total fines against the owners of £5,000 again with payment of the Council's costs. The prosecutions were as a result of coordinated work between this Council's planning enforcement officers, its Legal team and the Conservation officers employed by Essex County Council. They will continue to work towards the properties being reinstated into the best condition possible but in the case of the window replacement the historical glazing and original window fittings have it seems been lost forever.

The Council was also successful in its prosecution of the owner of Blunts Farm and his contractor for carrying out unauthorised work to a willow tree protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

These prosecutions show the Council's determination to maintain and protect the heritage and visual amenity of the District which we know is important both our residents and visitors.

Development Management

The income figures continue to show positive signs of steady growth despite the Income for both being revised upwards from the 1st December 2015 as shown in the table below.

	ORIGINAL BUDGET 2015/16	REVISED BUDGET 2015/16
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL	£595 000	£850 000
BUILDING CONTROL	£386 000	£470 000

Building Control

Building Control's income for December 2015 (period 9) was £27,227 and is 28% above the revised budget figure for December 2015.

Due to seasonal fluctuations December has always been a low income month for Building Control and the average December income for three years prior to 2015/16 has been just over £17 500.

Despite the upwards revision of their Budget, BC income to date is £360 564 and comprises 77% of the years upwardly revised budget £470 000. It is also two percentage points above the revised budget for the year April – December 2015.

To finish the 2015/16 year at or above budget BC requires an average income of £36 500 per month for January/February and March 2015.

Development Control

Income for Development Control for December 2015 (period 9) was £94,439 which is just over £20,000 above the revised budget figure for the month.

Development Control's income from April to December 2015 of £642,536 constitutes 76% of the revised budget of £850,000 for 2015/16.

Projecting the budget forward DC need an average of just over £80,000 per month to match the revised budget 2015/16 of £850,000.

Overall there are grounds for cautious optimism as it is likely that both BC and DC will be able to match or come close to the upwardly revised budget figures and bring in income for the year in the region of £1.3 million.