

Report to the Council

Committee: Cabinet

Subject: Performance Management Portfolio

Date: 22 February 2011

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Richard Bassett

Item: 6(i)

Recommending:

That the report of the Performance Management Portfolio Holder be noted.

Planned Maintenance Programmes 2011to 2015

As we are all aware the Council is under severe financial pressures to reduce and I have been working with the Finance and Economic Development Portfolio Holder to help find savings. At the Cabinet meeting on 31 January I presented the revised expenditure plans for the Civic Offices and other operational buildings. In total the reviews we have undertaken have reduced the planned expenditure down from just over £1m in FY2011-12 to £471k, a considerable saving.

The current property condition categories showed that 28% of operational property is maintained to a good standard and 72% to a satisfactory standard. No buildings were categorised as poor or bad. We could have looked at deferring any action until fabric, systems or equipment fails. This would cause varying degrees of disruption depending on the extent of failure and/or system involved and the time scale for procurement and rectification of the defect. Depending on the nature of the failure it could also lead to damage to other parts of the building fabric or services.

This would not have been a sensible long term approach and as such we have taken a balanced approach where we are concentrating on essential maintenance and also to ensure H&S requirements are met. Therefore it made sense to have a plan where we will invest if it saves us money in the long term. We have also taken a much more planned approach on our estimates for service life of equipment and as such have put estimates in future years to cover this. Officers also have done work on revising and checking our estimated costs. It is planned to use wherever possible internal resources to do planned works, such as using Building Control to do the building condition reports, saving £20k which would have gone outside consultants. We also will be using our Works Unit wherever possible to again save external expenditure.

The Civic Offices in 2009 received a Display Energy Certificate rating of G, the least efficient. Following closer monitoring and management of the energy usage and adjustments allowed under the regulations, the DEC for 2010 has improved to an E rating and was just 4 points short of achieving a D rating which is the typical rating for this size of building. This improvement does not take account of the recently completed works to the Condor Building at the Civic Offices to install a new heating system and new windows and insulating cladding. The additional savings both financial and carbon emissions will not be fully known until several months of energy bills and consumption figures have been analysed but we believe the savings will be significant.

To continue these energy rating improvements and hence make savings in our energy bills there are plans to enhance the roof space insulation of the Condor Building and for the installation of additional Smart Meters in association with an efficient energy management protocol.

Finally I would say that these expenditure projections are living documents and we will be constantly looking at how we can achieve our aims within or below our budgets. We will also need to review our budgets once we get the survey of operational buildings and commercial properties. The results of the condition survey, which clearly are not yet known, will determine the extent of the planned maintenance programmes for future years and the recommended levels of investment to maintain the condition and value of the Council's assets.

Key Objectives 2010/11 – Progress Report

The Council has sought to align the business, budget, and workforce planning and development processes over recent years, and these arrangements have provided an opportunity for the key objectives for each year to be incorporated within individual Directorate Business Plans, thereby further linking the various elements of the Council's performance management framework. The revised Key Objectives for FY11/12 were presented at the last Cabinet meeting. The Council's aims for the coming year have not changed from last year and are

- Safeguarding frontline services;
- Have the lowest Council Tax in Essex;
- Aspire to be a top performing Council in Essex;
- Improve efficiency through partnership working and use of assets;
- Community Leadership and Advocacy;

From these we have developed the Key Objectives for 2011/12. Following several revisions we have settled on 8 Key objectives which will enable us to progress our aims. These are:-

1. To review the Council's commercial landholdings in order to coordinate competing land use proposals, fulfill operational requirements, achieve value for money, and produce additional capital and revenue income to the Council.
2. To utilise existing resources to support the Government's vision for the 'Big Society', where individuals and communities have power and responsibility to create better neighbourhoods and local services;
3. To work in partnership with Essex County Council and other statutory and voluntary agencies, to ensure the effectiveness of local arrangements and services to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people;
4. To seek continuous performance improvement and the best use of resources, against the background of diminishing public expenditure;
5. To achieve the levels of net savings necessary to maintain the Council's sound financial position and provide the best level of service;
6. To maximise the provision of affordable housing within the district
7. To help mitigate the impact of the current economic conditions on local people and businesses, where resources permit and value for money can be achieved from the Council's activities
8. To deliver a sound Core Planning Strategy of the Local Development Framework;

If you review the objectives from FY10/11 you will see that these are an evolution of those but updated to reflect current progress, the changes of circumstances in the economy and also an update of timescales based on information learnt through the year. These will be presented to full Council for ratification.