

COUNCIL
12 MAY 2016**REPORTS OF CABINET****(b) SUMMARY OF DECISIONS TAKEN**

Property Asset Strategy - Enabling Economic Development and Service Delivery for the Council

1. The Council wished to enhance its Better Use of Property Programme by considering how cross-public sector land and property assets could support the local economy or generate income to help the Council and its partners to become more financially self-sufficient. The closer collaborative working with other organisations, brokered through Place Partnership, has given the Council significant opportunities to develop and exploit all the work delivered by the Council's Property Services Team to date, whilst supporting the broader focus on property as an enabler of economic development in the county. The potential benefits offered by Place Partnership included the strategic opportunity to drive issues such as the wider regeneration and growth across the region through to cashable savings from the removal of overlap and duplication in the current structures of the shareholder partners.

2. A new Property Asset Strategy for 2016-2020 has been developed and approved by Cabinet and represents an important step in the Council's aim to do things differently, utilising its assets more proactively for the benefit of the community. In developing the Strategy, the vision for the estate would be to support Council services well, help shape the local economy and generate income for the Council with a well-managed and dynamic corporate core. The strategic goals for the estate would be to:

- (a) Manage the property assets to ensure optimal efficiency of usage and effectiveness of support for the (front line) services being delivered from them;
- (b) Influence and enable cross-public sector service re-design and integration through effective challenge and innovative adaptation of the accommodation;
- (c) Achieve the maximisation of value from redundant assets and/or consider how they could support the local economy; and
- (d) Exploit opportunities for generating revenue income from the estate to support the Council's self-sufficiency agenda.

3. The goals would be building on the beacon role that the Council had locally and nationally achieved in terms of asset rationalisation and service transformation through a combination of:

- (a) Becoming more proactive in the redevelopment of redundant assets;
- (b) Developing the One Public Estate/One Public Service approach to locality

reviews at scale and pace; and

- (c) Developing new leadership and governance through the Council's Property Management Joint Venture Place Partnership.

4. The Director of Commercial and Change has been given authority to execute the Strategy and the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Transformation and Commissioning has been given authority to approve individual business cases for specific development projects in accordance with the above three aims. It has been estimated that the Council would achieve a minimum of £10m from capital receipts over 2016-2020. This did not however estimate the opportunities for savings and/or economic development from the utilisation of those assets. The Council will now discuss the Strategy with partners and review its own property estate and that of partners to identify early opportunities for development or rationalisation of assets for which business case(s) would be developed.

Worcestershire County Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy

5. The County Council is the lead Local Flood Authority for the county with responsibility for local flood risk. As such it is required to produce a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy (LFRMS) for the county. The Strategy forms part of the approach to flood risk in the county and sets out organisational responsibilities, takes an integrated approach to flood risk, and sets short, medium and long-term goals for the management of flood risk in the county. Worcestershire has been successful in securing funding for and implementing flood risk mitigation projects. The LFRMS will provide the framework for future decisions to be made on prioritisation of flood mitigation, funding bids and the evidence which would be required to support these including value for money, economic, social and environmental benefits, to enable continued success in an increasingly competitive funding environment. An Action Plan has been developed alongside the Strategy and sets out the detailed actions the Council and its partners would undertake to achieve the aims of the LFRMS.

6. The Worcestershire LFRMS has been subject to extensive consultation with formal flood risk management partners and feedback from this has been used to revise the document ahead of the 12-week formal public consultation. The Cabinet has now had the opportunity to consider the feedback from the public consultation exercise in the form of an addendum report and table which, in response, sets out proposed amendments to the Strategy. As a result it has agreed the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015-21 subject to the amendments indicated in the 'Response' column of the addendum table. It has also delegated authority to the Director of Economy and Infrastructure, in consultation with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment, to incorporate those amendments and finalise the LFRMS 2015-21.

7. The LFRMS will provide a framework for a co-ordinated and prioritised approach to reducing both the likelihood of flooding and the impact of flooding when it does occur. The Council has invested £14m of capital in flooding and drainage projects in the county to support both small and large schemes. Capital funding for flood risk management was however limited both nationally and locally and it was unlikely that all potential mitigation schemes could be funded in the short or medium-term. The Council was therefore working with partners to try and secure other potential sources of capital funding.

Resources Report

Revenue Budget Monitoring 2015/16 - Outturn Forecast as at 31 December 2015

8. The Cabinet was informed at its March meeting that the overall financial pressure forecast at that point in the 2015/16 financial year was £0.5m or 0.2% of the authorised cash limited budget. It was expected that by the end of the financial year the budget would be kept within the overall £326m cash limit. The most significant area of financial pressure all year had been the Looked After Children's placement budget which was forecasting a pressure of £5.8m for 2015/16. Local authorities nationally were facing pressure in this area. Looking forward, it was likely the Council would need to take some external borrowing to protect its cash position and ensure prudent management in consideration of potential future increases in interest rates.

Capital Programme Budget Monitoring - 2015/16 Forecast

9. The Council's capital expenditure at 30 December 2015 totalled £96m compared with the revised expenditure profile of £180m. The remainder of the financial year would see continued planned investment in the Energy from Waste Scheme of around £33m and continued investment in highways schools projects.

FutureFit Programme Update

10. The FutureFit savings programme target for 2015/16 was £27.5m and at the end of December 2015, £21.7m had either been delivered or confirmed as on target. Around half of the remainder was at greater risk of not being delivered during the 2015/16 financial year. Work had been carried out to mitigate this risk.

Pearl Izumi Tour Series - Redditch 26 May 2016

11. The popular and televised professional road cycling event, Pearl Izumi Tour Series, was anticipated to be returning to Redditch this year. This would provide another opportunity to promote World Class Worcestershire and bring visitors to Redditch. The Council would provide funding of up to £80,000 with contributions also being sought from partners towards these costs. The funding could be made available from within the Council's existing financial transactions budget with no impact on cash limits.

Mr S E Geraghty
Chairman

Contact Points

County Council Contact Points

County Council: 01905 763763

Worcestershire Hub: 01905 765765

Email: worcestershirehub@worcestershire.gov.uk

Specific Contact Points for this report

Nichola Garner, Committee and Appellate Officer

Tel: 01905 846626

Email: ngarner2@worcestershire.gov.uk

Background Papers

In the opinion of the proper officer (in this case the Head of Legal and Democratic Services) the following are the background papers relating to the subject matter of this report:

Agenda and background papers for the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3 March 2016.