

Title: **Asset Strategy and Management Plan**

Lead Member: **Cllr While – Finance Portfolio Holder**

Reporting officer: **Ian Jamieson – Corporate Director (Chief Finance Officer)**

Purpose

To update Members on the changes made following a review of the Asset Strategy and Management Plan 2006-2009, which was approved by Cabinet and reviewed by the Audit Committee in 2006.

Background

The plan was developed in accordance with best practice, in particular drawing on the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) guidance, Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and beacon best practice local authorities.

The plan sets out to optimise the utilisation of assets in terms of service benefits and financial return, providing a framework to allow asset management to evolve and embed within the Council.

The plan has been reviewed against the new Use of Resources criteria, best practice and the recent Communities and Local Government publication 'Building on Strong Foundations'.

Work on the plan has been limited to fine tuning due to Local Government Reorganisation (LGR).

Key issues

The main changes are as follows:

- Population increase from 123,500 to 131,165
- Asset value increase from £23.5m to £31.6m
- Duration of plan changed to 31 March 2009
- Increase in number of positive points of 'where we are now'
- Job titles updated throughout the document
- Asset base updated.
- Capital strategy updated using that approved by Council in February 2008.
- Capital resources are forecast to last to 31 March 2009 and borrowing will not be required.
- Operational arrangements amended to be consistent with Constitution
- Performance Management and monitoring updated.
- Performance indicators revised to reflect latest government announcements.

Use of Resources - 2008 assessments (see Appendix one)

The council has complied with all level two criteria, but not all level three. This is due to the addition of new criteria and need for embedding and the impact of LGR.

Best practice as compared to other councils

The Council is in line with other councils. However, there are a number of areas for improvement, which will be passed onto the new Wiltshire Council.

- An action plan to show how level three Use of Resources criteria will be met
- Development of additional indicators to help measure performance
- More detailed information on backlog maintenance

Framework for local Authority Asset Management

The council complies with most of the criteria set out in the framework. However, it could improve on several areas to meet the 'What looks Good' as per the framework. These are listed below and will be passed onto the new Wiltshire Council.

- Asset management processes - ensure that formal mechanisms are in place to engage with citizens and to collect, analyse and store relevant property data.
- Aligning assets with visions - clearly outline objectives of each asset and work across boundaries to align asset management strategies
- Implementation of Asset Management plan - establish clear strategic approaches to the utilisation of space and flexible working, co-location with partners and stakeholders.

Effect on strategies and codes

The Asset Management Plan has strong links with the Capital Strategy and Medium Term Financial Plan, which provide investment and resources in accordance with Corporate Plan aims and objectives.

Risk management implications

An Asset Management Plan is essential for the good management of assets and failure to put this in place would impact on the external Audit Commission opinion and Use of Resources scoring.

Finance and performance implications

The financial implications are covered in the asset management plan.

Legal and human rights implications

There are no direct legal and human rights implications.

Next Steps

The Asset Strategy and Management Plan will be embedded across the Council. This will be achieved primarily through the work of the Asset Management Group.

Recommendations

The Audit Committee:

- Notes the changes to the Asset Strategy and Management Plan.
- Request that the areas requiring further work are forwarded to the new Wiltshire Council.

Background Papers: Asset Strategy and Management Plan - room F33