

Committee: COUNCIL
Date: 22 JULY 2003
Agenda Item No: 7
Title: CAPITAL STRATEGY
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Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Capital Strategy as attached

Background

- 2 The 1998 White Paper 'Modern Local Government – In Touch with People' promised a new cross-service allocation for the bulk of central government capital support to local authorities – a single capital pot. The main purpose of this process was to allocate credit approvals (permission to borrow) to authorities in the context of assessed need. As Uttlesford has been debt-free since 1996 the bidding element has been irrelevant but nevertheless all authorities, including those debt-free, have had since 2001, to submit two documents, a Capital Strategy and an Asset Management Plan to the Regional Government Office for assessment.
- 3 The length, content and format of these documents is extremely prescribed and has to follow set criteria. The base information is the Capital Programme approved by Council on 22 February, 2003. The length is also stipulated being no more than six A4 pages of not less than size 10 font.
- 4 Authorities' capital strategies have to be submitted to Regional Government Office by no later than 31 July, 2003. This deadline is absolute and any late submissions will not be assessed. The assessment is carried out by a joint team of Regional Government staff and representatives from other Government Departments. A simple range of gradings – 'good', 'satisfactory' or 'poor' is applied separately to the Capital Strategy and the Asset Management Plan.
- 5 Single Capital Pot allocations which include the score assessments from the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan documents will be announced. by the Regional Government Offices in December 2003. The production of both documents is a factor considered by external audit in the CPA area for auditor judgement – 'Financial

Standing – Setting a Capital Programme’.

- 6 If Members have any comments about the documents, because of the tight 31 July deadline it would be helpful to have the details before 22 July.

RECOMMENDED that the Council adopts the Capital Strategy subject to any changes that may be agreed at this Council Meeting.

Background Papers: Letter from Government Office for the East of England dated 19 June, 2003.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Capital Strategy document

- 1.1 The purpose of this strategy is to support the Council's corporate programme by setting out the framework within which the use of capital resources - both financial and physical assets – can be co-ordinated and allocated in accordance with our key objectives.
- 1.2 The strategy demonstrates how the Council is prioritising, targeting and measuring the performance of its limited capital resources to maximise the value of that investment to obtain Best Value for the community. It also reflects processes and procedures strengthened, in response to feedback on last year's document given by GO-East, to ensure that the strategy is based on a corporate approach, informed by consultation with its stakeholders and partners, with sound methodology for prioritising proposals.
- 1.3 The document has been prepared to reflect approved policies, priorities and procedures. Before approval by the Council on 22 July 2003, it has been presented for consultation to the director members of the Corporate Management Team and heads of service members of the Senior Management Team. It has also been the subject of a workshop for Councillors on 8 July 2003.
- 1.4 The strategy has a four-year life cycle but should be seen as a developing document. Besides taking on board GO-East feedback, It is reviewed annually in the light of updated local priorities, the outcome of Best Value reviews and asset management planning, and also to reflect legislative and other significant changes, including ongoing developments in the Prudential Code for Capital Finance.

The Prudential Code

- 1.5 Underpinning the new Prudential Code is the principle that capital spending plans should be affordable, prudent and sustainable. Affordability is ultimately determined by the Council's judgment about acceptable council tax levels. In recent years it has been a key factor in shaping all of the Council's spending plans including those for capital.
- 1.6 Having had a significant, continuing flow of capital receipts for many years, this Council was in a position to repay all its historic debt in 1996. Legally, this gave the Council full access to all future receipts for capital funding. However, those same receipts have also precluded this authority from receiving the ongoing additional revenue support from Government for new capital spending available to most other local authorities, as no new borrowing has been needed. Usable capital receipts of over £10.8 million were available at 1 April 2003. To use all those receipts would in practice not be affordable, prudent or sustainable.
- 1.7 In consequence, the Council has had to give its highest priority to capital expenditure essential to maintain existing standards for its services and property assets, and to projects designed to produce revenue savings for the Council taxpayer.

2. OUR VISION, OUR KEY PRIORITIES AND CONSULTATION

Vision and Priorities

- 2.1 The Council's mission statement is
"Working together we create a better community"

The Council recognises that it cannot achieve this on its own and must work in partnership with others to develop and respond to the needs of its citizens.

- 2.2 The local strategic partnership is called Uttlesford Futures and has just published the first [Community Plan](#) for Uttlesford after extensive consultation within the community. The vision that came out was

"Uttlesford, a safe and pleasant environment in which to live, grow and prosper"

The document sets out what we will do under the following headings to work towards that vision:

- Safety of the Community
- Conserving the environment for future generations
- Improving health
- Transport – getting around
- Economic well-being – education and economy

2.2 The Council's new administration has already begun to revisit the Council's own priorities in the context of this Community Plan. These priorities are set out in a document entitled "Quality of Life 2003-2007". The key themes are :

- Strong community leadership
- More openness through public scrutiny
- Improve access to services
- Protect the environment and character of the district
- Increase recycling
- Promote tourism and green leisure opportunities
- Encourage low cost housing
- Develop better opportunities for young people

2.3 These key priorities and principles have resulted from extensive discussions in the light of the following considerations:

- The responses from the general public and local bodies, in particular during the development of the Community Plan
- The views of our key partner organisations
- The new demands placed upon Councils by the Government
- Elected Councillors' views of what is important to local people
- Our financial situation
- Our existing strategies and plans, which commit us to particular actions.

Consultation

2.4 In 1995 the Council introduced tenant participation and following extensive consultation a Tenant Compact was introduced on 1 April 2000. The council employs a full time Tenant Participation Officer. The work between the Council and the tenant panels has greatly assisted the Council in improving its practices and procedures. For example, Tenants Panels have already expressed their views for prioritising the possible Housing projects outlined in Appendix 2.

2.5 The Council also recognises the need to consult with its business ratepayers, town and parish councils and key partner organisations as well as with local residents. Recent examples of this include:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|
| • Council Structures | Public 2000 |
| • BVPI | Public/Users 2000 |
| • BV Review - Communications | Public/Press 2000 |
| • Service Priorities | Public 2001 |
| • CICs | Public 2001 |
| • Local Plan | Public/Agents 2002 |
| • District Open Meetings | Public 2002 |
| • Uttlesford Futures | Public/Business 2002 |
| • Traffic Management | Public/Business 2003 |
| • Budget Consultation | Public 2002 & 2003 |

- 2.6 Service led consultation is also carried out and specific groups e.g. Council tenants or Leisure Centre Users are targeted as part of the Best Value Review process or in relation to specific capital projects.
- 2.7 The Council will continue to consult with its strategic and other partners on the developing content of the Capital Strategy with the aim of identifying common themes and interests to actively progress.
- 2.8 The Council's Communications Strategy aims to "Introduce new ways to consult and involve people in decisions about the services which affect them and promote understanding of the council's policies, procedures and activities" and to "Take extra steps to seek to involve people whose voices may not usually be heard: young people, ethnic minorities and people with disabilities". This work is being strengthened by a new communications/PR post.

Links to the Capital Programme

- 2.9 The whole strategic planning process begins in June each year with an annual Policy Review where Members, Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Senior Management Team (SMT) begin the process of translating the updated priorities of the Council into concrete proposals and actions for inclusion in service plans, revenue budgets and capital programme. Thus the budgets and Capital programme for 2004/2005 will be expected to reflect proposals deriving from the "Quality of Life 2003/2007" document referred to at 2.2 above.
- 2.10 Underpinning this process is a series of existing, approved strategies and plans designed to help provide a suitable framework for delivering the Council's vision, priorities and objectives, both service focused and crosscutting. In addition to the Capital Strategy, they currently comprise the following:

- [Best Value Performance Plan 2003/2004](#)
- Quality of Life Plan
- [Community Safety Strategy](#)
- [Local Agenda 21](#)
- [Access Committee](#)
- [Crime and Disorder Reduction Strategy](#)
- [Uttlesford Futures - Community Plan](#)
- [Risk Management Policy](#)
- [Emergency Planning](#)
- HRA Business Plan
- [IEG Strategy](#)
- [IT Strategy](#)
- Fuel Poverty Report
- Asset Management Plan
- [Service Plans](#)
- [Securing Competitive and Successful Services](#)
- [Waste Management Strategy](#)
- Treasury Management Strategy
- [Housing Needs Survey](#)
- [Communications Strategy](#)
- Tourism Strategy
- [Local Plan](#)
- Financial Policy Review

- 2.11 Key areas of Capital Expenditure within the approved programme therefore derive from the above planning process which starts in June, producing proposals for prioritisation and final approval by the Council in February, following the final assessment under the Prudential Code.

3. PARTNERING WITHIN UTTLESFORD

- 3.1 Besides the local strategic partnership, Uttlesford Futures, the Council has a wide range of experience of partnership working across a range of projects and places great emphasis in its [Procurement Strategy](#) on seeking out mutually beneficial arrangements for delivering service outcomes in partnership with others. Recent notable successes on revenue services include:
- Supporting People implementation (Braintree DC)
 - Stevenage and Uttlesford Audit Partnership
 - Payroll Service (Bedford BC)
- 3.2 In recent years, the Capital Programme has also reflected similar partnership successes. Perhaps the most significant of these has been our work with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and developers through the Planning process, to deliver low cost housing in the district to replace Council dwellings sold under "Right to Buy". Until the scheme was abolished in April of this year, it has been possible using our unused capital receipts, to attract funding for local schemes from the Housing Corporation in the form of LASHG. The latest Housing Needs Survey confirms that this strategy has been successful in helping to meet demand. Although LASHG is now abolished, transitional arrangements are still in place (see 4.2 below). The Council has confirmed its priority to do everything possible to continue to give practical support to RSLs for this purpose, using whatever resources are affordable locally or through the Single Capital Pot..
- 3.3 Another successful project coming to fruition this year is the first leisure based PFI project in the country. The project will enable major refurbishment of the Lord Butler Fitness and Leisure Centre in Saffron Walden and the building of two new public leisure centres at Helena Romanes School and Sixth Form Centre, Great Dunmow and Mountfitchet High School, Stansted. The total development cost for the project is £10.5 million with ongoing revenue support over 30 years from the Government by way of Special Grant.
- 3.4 The Council is committed to working with its strategic partners on capital projects, with funds flowing in both directions to facilitate projects of mutual benefit. In recent years these have included assistance to Essex County Council towards Library facilities at Great Dunmow (see 4.5), joint funding with Essex Police of public information facilities at Thaxted and a great deal of close working with Town and Parish Councils in the provision of local community amenities, such as youth facilities at Stansted Mountfitchet. On IT there currently is the Essex On-line partnership (see 5.13) and a joint procurement exercise of a new Financial Information System with Stevenage (see 6.2) . Relocation of the Dunmow Depot in two or three years time, is based on Asset Management Plan working with Essex County Council Highways department. The Council is also an active partner in the Public Service agreement (PSA) agreed last year between Essex County Council and the ODPM.
- 3.5 This year also sees the start of a £550,000 project of major refurbishment to the historic Bridge End Gardens in Saffron Walden, using Heritage Lottery funding in partnership with others (see 4.6).

4. FUNDING

Capital Programme

- 4.1 In February 2003 the Resources Committee approved the Council's Capital Programme for the next four years (2003 – 2007) as summarised in Appendix 1. As from 2003/04 all new bids will be evaluated against the Capital Strategy and a rank order established that should enable the council to determine the use of it's estimated available resources.
- 4.2 Subsequent to the approval of the Capital Programme the government announced the end of the Social Housing Grant and a change in the use of Right to Buy housing capital receipts. These are both current sources of significant cash income for the Council. There is protection for authorities who have made commitments with RSL's in their areas, and the ODPM has set aside funds for the next three years, to 2005/2006, to honour those existing schemes that have already received grant confirmation from the Housing Corporation.
- 4.3 In 2002/03 a five year work programme was identified and an investment programme tied to ensure that the Council meets the 2010 deadline for Decent Homes. The programme aims to ensure that the number of

homes classified as non-decent is reduced by a third by 2004. Full details are contained within the Housing Business Plan.

4.4 The Capital Programme reflects the Council's priority areas for spending on its own assets and also the Council's private sector responsibilities. Social Housing responsibilities are subject to the comments in 4.3 above. The General Capital Programme reflects Council priorities in the areas of Environmental, Leisure and Customer Service including the Leisure Centres PFI scheme referred to in 3.3 above.

Available Resources

4.5 **Credit Approvals** – The Council has received £636,000 in credit approvals for 2003/04 from the Single Capital Pot. Being debt-free, credit approvals have been of little practical use in funding our own expenditure. Historically, any received have been transferred to Essex County Council to progress Uttlesford based projects. The latest example was towards new library facilities associated with an imminent redevelopment in Great Dunmow town centre. The 2003/04 allocation, for technical reasons related to legislative changes, will be used to release set-aside receipts for use on the Council housing stock.

4.6 **Grants** – The Council continues to seek grant funding wherever possible. At present grants are received towards disabled facilities improvements and the e-government programme. In addition, the Council is currently working to restore Bridge End Gardens, a historic Victorian garden including maze. To enable this project to be undertaken grants have been received from the following:

Heritage Lottery Fund	£387,000
Linbury Trust	£100,000
Saffron Walden Town Council	£ 25,000
Essex Environmental Trust	£ 15,453
British Airports	£ 10,000

4.7 **Capital Receipts** – Capital receipts over the next four years will be realised through the sale of Council houses, and through the disposal of surplus assets identified through the asset management process. It is the Government's intention that 75% of housing receipts should be contributed in future to a national pool. However,

The ODPM has outlined 3 year transitional arrangements for authorities, like Uttlesford, who are debt-free with housing stock when the new capital finance regime is introduced, expected to be April 2004. The guidance was "*An authority in this category will receive up to 75%, 50%, or 25% (in years one, two and three respectively), subject to them using the resources for housing, of their share of the total capital receipts which we have estimated will be paid into the pool by debt-free authorities*". Appendix 2 shows the amount of money estimated to be available and also some initially identified possible projects. These projects, fully assessed, are due to be prioritised by the Housing Strategy Working Party in the summer of 2003. Tenant Panel consultation has already taken place.

4.8 **Revenue Financing** – Apart from the statutory contribution for depreciation to the Major Repairs Reserve, revenue contributions have also been made from the Housing Revenue Account to fund peaks in the stock improvement programme while a working balance is established on that reserve. In addition contributions are planned for upgrading the housing IT system. General Fund contributions have reflected use of revenue reserves earmarked for one-off capital purposes. The Council has also now started to address longer term issues of prudence and sustainability by earmarking revenue for depreciation on its operating premises and trading service vehicles. The ability to extend this principle to all asset depreciation will depend on the extent to which ongoing Government support for capital takes depreciation into account.

4.9 **Public Private Partnerships/PFI** – Where the above resources are insufficient to meet demand, the Council is committed to exploring all funding opportunities including PFI and PPP where appropriate. The Council already has a Leisure PFI Scheme that is an important flagship project for the Council. Government Special Grant support has provided the opportunity to expand and develop leisure facilities to meet the future needs, expressed in an extensive consultation exercise, of the population of Uttlesford, which is set to expand from 69800 to 76000 over the next ten years.

4.10 **New Demand for Investment** – With a “no growth” policy for revenue budgets in place only schemes falling within the parameters set out in paragraph 1.7 above were submitted for consideration. All requests for capital funding were approved for the forthcoming 2003/04 financial year. In addition, all known future projects also have sufficient funding in place.

Revenue Implications

4.11 The Capital Programme impacts on revenue in three main ways:

- i) increasing or reducing ongoing revenue budgets for running costs
- ii) cash-flow and interest receipts changes as a result of both the use and generation of capital receipts.
- iii) revenue contributions to capital expenditure

These factors are always considered in the appraisal of all capital schemes (see paragraph 7)

5. CROSS CUTTING ACTIVITY

5.1 In the spring of 2001 we consulted the Uttlesford community about new ways that the Council could make decisions. The clear result was that citizens wanted us to adopt a streamlined committee system. We listened to them and in the autumn we made changes to how our committees operate.

5.2 We set up the following policy committees:

- Resources
- Community and Leisure
- Health and Housing
- Environment and Transport

5.3 The role of these committees is to formulate and review policies, control and review how we spend money and use our resources, promote community partnerships and ensure that the Council is complying with the law.

5.4 We also set up two overview and scrutiny committees. The role of these committees is to monitor, review and advise on policy, be responsible for best value reviews and to monitor how we deliver our services and spend council tax payers' money. There is also a Development Control and Licensing Committee which makes decisions on planning and licensing applications. Following new licensing responsibilities the latter committee will become two separate committees from September 2003.

5.5 The full Council remains responsible for appointing the chairman and committees and it agrees our plans and strategies and approves budgets.

5.6 As from May 2003 the number of Councillors has increased to 44 who are elected to represent local interests and act as the voice of the community.

5.7 Following the change of leadership in the May 2003 elections, and the appointment of a new Chief Executive towards the end of 2003, further revisions to improve service delivery are planned. Corporate capacity has recently been increased by the appointment of a Performance Manager. In addition an Interim Director – Strategic Development has been appointed to lead on strategic direction and how the Council's priorities can be delivered over time.

5.8 The development of Uttlesford Futures and the range of cross-cutting schemes involving working with partners identified in Appendix 3 illustrate the Council's commitment to cross-cutting issues. There are, however, certain areas, which merit specific comment.

Community Safety

5.9 Uttlesford is very fortunate in being an area of low crime. However there are issues to be addressed and our aim is to reduce crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour in Uttlesford. The Uttlesford Community Safety Action Team comprising of Uttlesford Council, Essex Police and Essex County Council was established in 1995. Other partners now include the Probation Service, Health Service, Youth Service and the police Authority. Reductions in crime figures have already been achieved and this work continues through the current strategy (2002 – 2005). Achievements to date include:

- Providing support for victims of domestic violence, including the production of a “help” booklet and a “credit card” of useful telephone numbers.
- Seatbelt campaigns and workshops
- Child car seat checks
- Developing Neighbourhood Watch schemes
- Providing free sport sessions for young people
- Continuing to enable the Proof of Age partnership
- Reducing drug and alcohol abuse through training for specialist workers, peer education and development of the Mobile Information Bus

Sustainability

5.10 The Council aims to promote and encourage activities which minimise harmful environmental impact, reduce levels of pollution and create a cleaner and healthier environment. It is also committed to the principal of sustainable development and schemes which have an impact on the quality of life for now and the future.

- The continuing development of the recycling facilities. This includes household collection of newspaper, cardboard and plastic bottles. The Council also promotes the recycling of other domestic waste products in partnership with Essex County Council
- Supplementary Planning Guidance for Developers to encourage them to build in a way that is more environmentally friendly
- Promotion of energy saving ideas and schemes, including the sale of energy efficient light bulbs

E-Government and Asset Management

5.11 Fundamental to the achievement of the Council’s objectives is the need to ensure the effective use of resources through good management of all its assets and the provision of efficient services that demonstrate best value for the community. In addition, the need to encourage greater public participation and involvement with local issues by improving access to Council services is key to achieving the e-government goal. The main capital input to this category is through investment in ICT development in support of the achievement of e-government targets by 2005. Key priorities for ICT are:-

- Improving the quality of life for the people of Uttlesford by providing efficient and responsive services to all
- Maintaining the current e-government enabled systems to ensure continued provision of services
- Introducing a new Financial Management system
- Supporting new ways of working
- Participating in relevant national e-government projects
- Widening access to on-line services
- Meeting local priorities
- Improving communications

5.12 The Council recognises the importance of partnership in meeting the expectations of the e-government target and the needs of the citizens.

5.13 The Council is a partner in Essex On Line, a partnership of authorities within Essex that have been successful in obtaining LGOL (Local Government On Line) funding of £400,000 for 2003/4. This funding will result in the delivery of the Essex Customer Relationship Management project. This will lead to improved enquiry handling, better citizen access and joined up services across departments and partner authorities.

Asset Management Plan

5.14 The Council produces an Asset Management Plan each year in parallel to this strategy. This too is a developing document also reflecting ongoing improvements to the processes and procedures needed to make it a corporate document. There are obviously links between the documents, with projects coming forward from Asset Management Planning such as the Office and Depot Relocation projects included in the Capital Programme, as well as capital receipts projected from the disposal of surplus land in Saffron Walden. The Asset Re-instatement programme is also a key part of the Capital programme, for the second year now. This includes provision for bringing our public premises up to the standards now required for access for the disabled within the timescales laid down.

6. VALUE FOR MONEY AND QUALITY

6.1 The Council has adopted a procurement Strategy for Securing Competitive and Successful Services to provide a common framework for the acquisition of goods and services. Detailed guidance in relation to capital projects is provided in the Council's Financial Regulations and Standing Orders related to contracts. These have recently been revised to incorporate the requirements of Best Value and the new political management arrangements.

6.2 A current example of a partnering arrangement in accordance with the Strategy for Securing Competitive and Successful Services is the replacement Financial Management Information System. This is a joint procurement of two financial systems, which may or may not be the same. The partnership purchasing power should ensure an extremely competitive tendering process. If the two Councils (Uttlesford and Stevenage) agree on the same software supplier there is an option for Uttlesford to host the system on behalf of the two authorities. Thus hardware savings may also be achieved through this partnership process.

Partnership working has always been a Council theme and the Uttlesford / Fox IT Revenues partnership, now in its third year of operation is a prime example. This is a partnership whereby Fox provide the IT hardware and expertise from their offices in Daventry and this is connected via communications links to the Council offices for the provision of the Revenues and Benefits service.

7. PRIORITISING OF CAPITAL SCHEMES

7.1 Following feedback from GO-East on last year's Capital Strategy document, the capital project assessment and prioritisation processes have now been strengthened within the Council. For the 2004/05 Capital Programme and beyond the Council will require formal justification for any new capital bid, whether funded wholly or partly by the Council. The approved process is shown at Appendix 4 with changes made highlighted in blue. Proposals are now to be prepared by sponsors in a common format setting out both the capital required and any revenue consequences. The overall process assesses each project's fit with:-

- The Council's key objectives and priorities
- Service Plans and Best Value Reviews
- The Prudential Code for Capital Finance
- Public consultation responses

Sponsors are also required to mark, and rank, each bid for capital resources against a range of criteria including.

- Statutory and legislative requirement
- Links to Local & National Priorities

- Links to Service Plans
- Deliverable and realistic
- Revenue impact / Economic return
- Project risk assessment
- Alternative funding / delivery arrangements

7.2 The Capital Strategy Officer Task Group consider and evaluate bids against the same range of criteria to determine priority for inclusion in the Capital Programme. The proposals outlined at appendix 2 have provided the first projects on which to test and develop this methodology. The group also take into account the following considerations, within the overall context:

- Whether the project is affordable
- Whether the capital investment is prudent
- Whether the project outcome is sustainable

Recommendations from this Group are reviewed by the Corporate Management Team, headed by the Chief Executive, after consultation with Heads of Service. At this stage bids go to the relevant sponsoring committee for any final decisions needed, taking on board local representations or other consultation exercises. Where numerous projects are involved, there may be a need for a preliminary view to be recommended by a special Member Group e.g. IT projects go to Resources Committee via the E-government Member Task Group; the projects at Appendix 2 will be going to Health and Housing Committee via the Housing Strategy Working Party. From these agreed bids, an overall package will be confirmed and recommended to Council for inclusion in the Capital Programme by Resources Committee. The package will also be considered by Scrutiny Committee(s)

7.3 This process allows capital resources to be applied in the most cost-effective way and for revenue implications to be co-ordinated on a corporate basis.

8. MANAGEMENT, MONITORING AND REVIEW FRAMEWORK

8.1 Each year the Council establishes a performance management timetable (Appendix 5). This timetable includes:

- An annual review of performance outturn split by Scrutiny Committee
- An annual service plan for each service
- Quarterly Service progress meetings with responsible Director
- Quarterly Service report to Corporate Management Team (CMT)
- Appraisal process
- Best Value Performance Plan production
- Capital Strategy Review
- Budget Setting process
- Policy Options Review

8.2 A new Performance Management system based on sixty performance measures has now been introduced. The system examines the corporate and service health of the authority and this information is reported on a quarterly basis to members via Scrutiny Committee(s) and managers via Corporate and Service Management Teams. The reporting mechanism is based on a Traffic Light system of Green for on target, Amber up to 10% off Target and Red for more than 10% off Target.

8.3 Statutory performance indicators provide quantifiable information regarding service performance. However they cannot provide the full picture and in recognition of this Services set key tasks to measure progress against particular projects. In addition to the property and statutory performance indicators some Services have developed local indicators to assist managers and staff to deliver services effectively. Some of these local indicators are included in the quarterly Performance Management system.

8.4 The process for monitoring and review of the Capital Programme is as follows:-

- a) Heads of Service are responsible for the ongoing management and monitoring of individual schemes within the Capital Programme. Up to date, online financial information is available and financial reports are provided to enable Service Managers and their accountants to monitor progress
- b) The Capital Strategy Officer Task Group will meet on a quarterly basis and reports are provided to CMT on scheme progress identifying and highlighting variations.
- c) For all e-government projects formal project management methodology has been introduced. This is based around the PRINCE2 methodology. In addition, for each project, a director-level "Project Sponsor" has been identified to oversee the progress of the project and ensure that deadlines are met, budgets are not exceeded, and predicted outcomes and benefits are realised. The methodology also requires that all external partners and stakeholders are identified and fully involved in each project. In addition, the methodology includes project completion evaluation reviews to identify amongst others:
 - Variances between estimated and actual costs
 - Client satisfaction
 - Achievement of objectives and targets
 - Revenue Implications
 - Best practice implications e.g. lessons learnt and changes to be implemented

In addition the spend profile of the Capital Strategy will be reported to Committee(s) so that Members, as well as managers, are fully aware of the process.

8.5 The Council continues to look at ways to further build on its performance management framework. This includes reviewing Best Value recommendations and the use of Performance Indicators, developing monitoring with partners and the community plus the guidance deriving from the CPA process including findings from the IDeA Peer Challenge.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 Uttlesford District Council is committed to managing its resources effectively to deliver its priorities. However, lack of Government revenue support for new capital investment, other than for new borrowing, has restricted the Council's ability over recent years to do much more than maintain existing standards, except by enabling outcomes through third party partners. Changes to Government support are imminent, but their impact on the Council is still uncertain which is a major disadvantage for strategic forward planning.

9.2 It is hoped that from 2004/05 the new support mechanism established will recognise that the costs of asset depreciation and interest costs on new capital investment are similar for all authorities, not just those who are obliged to borrow. Such ongoing support is essential to progress real service growth and improvement with any certainty and would allow the Council to be more ambitious in its own capital investment planning.

9.2 The processes and procedures, including many of those relating to the Prudential Code for Capital Finance, are in place to enable this to happen and they have been established in a transparent and equitable way for the benefit of the community.

APPENDIX 1 - CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2003/2004 – 2006/2007

	2003/04 Estimate £	2004/05 Estimate £	2005/06 Estimate £	2006/07 Estimate £
HOUSING CAPITAL PROGRAMME				
Adaptations for the Disabled	163,200	120,000	120,000	120,000
Central Heating Replacement	376,900	343,400	351,900	360,400
Bathroom and Kitchen Refurbishment	246,600	60,000	60,000	30,000
Energy Conservation / Plant Replacement	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Security Programme	39,400	14,000	14,000	14,000
Bathroom and Kitchen Upgrades	151,900	117,800	173,600	198,400
Re-wiring Schemes	-	176,000	147,400	136,400
Re-windowing Schemes	386,400	433,500	438,600	418,200
Environmental Improvements	62,000	20,000	20,000	20,000
Communal TV Systems Upgrade	12,400	12,000	12,000	-
Major Works - Repackaging & Voids	222,100	255,900	259,300	254,450
Repair/replace key building components	99,000	-	-	-
Decent Homes	-	180,000	180,000	180,000
Cash incentive schemes	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000
Integrated Housing IT System	70,000	-	-	-
GENERAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME				
Private Sector Renewal Grants	70,000	70,000	70,000	70,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	60,000	60,000	60,000	60,000
Residents Parking - Pay & Display Equip	4,680	-	-	-
Bridge End Gardens Project	508,000	130,540	-	-
Flood Relief schemes	50,000	-	-	-
Leisure Project	1,147,000	-	-	-
Community Project Grants	24,000	24,000	24,000	24,000
Skateboard/Roller Blade Ramp	19,000	-	-	-
Replacement Great Dunmow Depot	-	-	450,000	45,000
Asset Reinstatement Programme	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
Refuse Collection & Recycling	250,000	250,000	205,000	250,000
Street Cleansing	45,000	56,000	95,000	-
Light Van Replacement (C. Services)	56,000	30,000	50,000	30,000
Light Van Replacement (General Fund)	15,000	76,000	48,000	40,000
Container and Equip Replacement Cycle	8,000	8,000	-	19,000
IT - National Land & Property Gazetteer	12,500	-	-	-
IT - Electoral Registration	20,000	-	-	-
IT - E-Services Development General	40,000	-	-	-
IT - E-Services Development GIS Online	25,000	-	-	-
IT - Intranet Development	17,000	-	-	-
IT - Essex Online Partnership Projects	30,000	-	-	-
IT - National E-Government Projects	20,000	-	-	-
IT - Replacement Financial Management Information System	130,000	-	-	-
IT - Benefits Verification Framework	15,840	-	-	-

IT - Finish upgrade to operating system	29,170	-	-	-
IT - Upgrade disaster recovery	40,000	-	-	-
IT - Replacement Server Programme	15,000	-	-	-
IT - Programme to be decided	-	480,000	320,000	150,000
TOTAL ESTIMATED CAPITAL EXPENDITURE	4,701,090	3,137,140	3,318,800	2,639,850

	2003/04 Estimate £	2004/05 Estimate £	2005/06 Estimate £	2006/07 Estimate £
FUNDING AVAILABLE				
Set aside capital receipts (credit approvals)	630,000			
Usable set-aside capital receipts (debt free)	1,938,300	577,420	980,680	522,000
HRA Revenue Contribution	70,000	180,000	180,000	180,000
HRA Major Repair Reserve	1,259,900	1,682,600	1,726,800	1,681,850
Government Grant – disabled facilities	36,000	36,000	36,000	36,000
Government Grant – e-government	200,000			
IT partnership funding - projected		330,000	170,000	
Bridge End Gardens Project	435,000	111,120		
Depreciation Reserve – DSO Vehicles	41,890	30,000	35,320	30,000
Depreciation Reserve – other vehicles		100,000	100,000	100,000
Depreciation Reserve - premises	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
	4,701,090	3,137,140	3,318,800	2,639,850

APPENDIX 2

TRANSITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING FOR DEBT FREE AUTHORITIES WITH HOUSING STOCK

	2003/04 Estimate £	2004/05 Estimate £	2005/06 Estimate £	2006/07 Estimate £
ESTIMATED ADDITIONAL CAPITAL FUNDING AVAILABLE	-	1,283,000	951,000	286,000

POSSIBLE INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES	Links to Needs	Scores Points	Can be Costed	Practical in time	Risk Factor
PRIVATE SECTOR IMPROVEMENTS					
Renewable Energy initiatives – private sector grants	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Grants to landlords to improve private rented	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Private sector boiler replacement grants (no means test)	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Action on empty private sector homes	?	✓	✓	✓	4
COUNCIL STOCK IMPROVEMENTS					
CCTV for sheltered scheme security	✓	✓	✓	✓	1
Pro-active adaptations for disabled	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Accelerate “decent homes” programme	✓	?	✓	✓	2
Renewable Energy initiatives – council stock	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Address some identified “backlog repairs”	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Stock improvements above “decent homes” standard	?	?	✓	✓	2
External insulation of solid wall properties	✓	✓	✓	✓	2
Conversion of sheltered scheme for frail elderly	✓	✓	✓	✓	3
ADDITIONAL SOCIAL HOUSING RESOURCES					
Buy dwellings on open market	✓	✓	✓	✓	1
Additional support for RSL sector new build	✓	✓	✓	?	3
Buy housing land on open market	✓	✓	✓	?	4
Replacement for B&B for homelessness	✓	✓	?	?	4

Key To Preliminary Risk Assessment Of Proposal Failing To Be Delivered Within Timescale

- 1 Low Risk
- 2 Low To Medium Risk
- 3 Medium To High Risk
- 4 High Risk

Appendix 3 - Partnerships and Cross Cutting Activity

Key Priorities	Key Partners	Examples
To safeguard the environment and enhance it for future generations.	Essex County Council, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust, NHS Trusts/Health Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, Local Chambers of Trade, Energy Saving Trust, Essex Wildlife Trust, Police Wildlife Liaison Officer, British Trust for Conservation volunteers	Local Agenda 21 Essex Waste Management Partnership Uttlesford Futures Uttlesford Nature Conservation Working Group Insulation Grants The Flitch Way Liaison Group The Great Dunmow Maltings Preservation Trust Uttlesford Nature Conservation Working Group
To manage the economy to meet the needs of the whole community.	Essex County Council, Essex Police, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust, NHS Trusts/Health Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, Local Chambers of Trade, Housing Associations, DWP, Saffron Sight, CVS Uttlesford, CAB, St Raphaels (physically disabled), The Stort Trust, East Herts & west Essex Multiple Sclerosis Society, Age Concern, Uttlesford Buffy Bus Association, Uttlesford Carers, Alzheimers Society, Uttlesford Crossroads, Uttlesford MIND, MENCAP,	Uttlesford Futures Rural Rate Relief for village post offices Benefits Forum Uttlesford Area Access Group
To improve the health of our community and ensure Uttlesford remains a safe place to live.	Essex County Council, Essex Police, Probation Service, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust, NHS Trusts/Health Authorities, Town and Parish Councils, Local Chambers of Trade, Housing Associations, local schools, sports clubs, DWP, Saffron Sight, CVS Uttlesford, CAB, St Raphaels (physically disabled), The Stort Trust, East Herts & west Essex Multiple Sclerosis Society, Age Concern, Uttlesford Buffy Bus Association, Uttlesford Carers, Alzheimers Society, Uttlesford Crossroads, Uttlesford MIND, MENCAP	Community Safety Partnership Proof of Age Scheme CCTV Funding Uttlesford Futures
To ensure the choice of homes better meets our community's needs.	All Housing Associations, Essex County Council, Town and Parish Councils, Tenant Panels, Private Sector, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust, NHS Trusts/Health Authorities, Braintree District Council, Energy Saving Trust	Various affordable housing schemes Repairs and improvements to Council owned housing stock Accommodation for vulnerable single people Supporting people partnership Private Sector and Disabled

		Facilities Grants Insulation Grants
To ensure better access for all communities to services and jobs.	Essex County Council, Uttlesford Primary Care Trust, Match Supported Employment, Braintree District Council	Uttlesford Area Access Group Braintree and Uttlesford Enterprise Agency Uttlesford Futures

APPENDIX 4 – CAPITAL STRATEGY DECISION MAKING PROCESS

Please see flowchart

APPENDIX 5 - KEY PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE 2003/04

Month/Date	Heads of Service	Senior Management Team	Corporate Management Team	Members
April 25	Final quarterly review with Director of 2002/03 service plan		Quarterly core PIs Budget updates	
May 19 30		Draft Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) Capital strategy discussion	Final draft BVPP	
June 12 18 27			Agree new performance system Draft capital strategy	BVPP approval Scrutiny 1 review of 2002/03 performance outturn Scrutiny 1 agree new performance system
July 1 9	Quarterly service plan review with Director	Future policy options for the Council		Scrutiny 2 review of 2002/03 performance outturn. Agree new performance system

Month/Date	Heads of Service	Senior Management Team	Corporate Management Team	Members
July (cont)				
11			Guidance for Council on future policy options	
22				Capital strategy approval Strategic policy guidance and priorities
24			Quarterly core PIs Budget updates Audit report monitoring	
August				
September 23		Overall service/budget planning		Scrutiny 1 Performance monitoring April-June
October	Appraisal reviews		Appraisal reviews	
3			Draft service/budget planning proposals	Scrutiny 2 Performance April - June
23				H&H proposals
28				C&L proposals
30			Quarterly core PIs Budget updates 6 month performance outturn	

Month/Date	Heads of Service	Senior Management Team	Corporate Management Team	Members
November	Appraisal reviews Quarterly service plan review with Director Prepare draft service plans		Appraisal Reviews	
3				DC&L proposals
4		Service plan preparation		E&T proposals
12				Scrutiny 1 - 6 month performance outturn
				Resources proposals
20				Scrutiny 1 Performance management July-Sept
28			Audit report monitoring and DA management letter	
December To be arranged			Draft service plans	Scrutiny 2 – 6 month performance outturn
3				Performance Management July-Sept
12			Service plans/budgets	Council approval of overall budget strategy
16				DA management letter

Month/Date	Heads of Service	Senior Management Team	Corporate Management Team	Members
January 2004	Quarterly service plan review with Director Appraisals		Appraisals	C&L approval of service plans/budgets H&H approval of service plans/budgets DC&L approval of service plans/budgets E&T approval of service plans/budgets Resources approval of service plans/budgets
6				
8				
12				
13				
22				
23			Quarterly core PIs Budget updates	Scrutiny 1 Performance Management Oct-Dec
27		Draft BVPP summary		
February	Appraisals			Scrutiny 2 Performance Management Oct-Dec
4				
10				Budget approval Resources
20			Agree BVPP summary	Council approval of budget
March	Service plans to be signed off with Director			Scrutiny 1/2 Review performance system.
3		Discuss Draft BVPP		

Committee: COUNCIL

Date: 22 JULY 2003

Agenda Item No: 8

Title: ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Author: David Demery (01799) 510520

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the Asset Management Plan as attached

Background

- 2 The 1998 White Paper 'Modern Local Government – In Touch with People' promised a new cross-service allocation for the bulk of central government capital support to local authorities – a single capital pot. The main purpose of this process was to allocate credit approvals (permission to borrow) to authorities in the context of assessed need. As Uttlesford has been debt-free since 1996 the bidding element has been irrelevant but nevertheless all authorities, including those debt-free, have had since 2001, to submit two documents, a Capital Strategy and an Asset Management Plan to the Regional Government Office for assessment.
- 3 The length, content and format of these documents is extremely prescribed and has to follow set criteria. The base information is the Capital Programme approved by Council on 22 February, 2003. The length is also stipulated being no more than 20 A4 pages of not less than size 10 font.
- 4 Authorities' asset management plans have to be submitted to Regional Government Office by no later than 31 July, 2003. This deadline is absolute and any late submissions will not be assessed. The assessment is carried out by a joint team of Regional Government staff and representatives from other Government Departments. A simple range of gradings – 'good', 'satisfactory' or 'poor' is applied separately to the Capital Strategy and the Asset Management Plan.
- 5 Single Capital Pot allocations which include the score assessments from the Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan documents will be announced. by the Regional Government Offices in December 2003. The production of both documents is a factor considered by external audit in the CPA area for auditor judgement – 'Financial Standing – Setting a Capital Programme'.
- 6 If Members have any comments about the documents, because of the tight 31 July deadline it would be helpful to have the details before 22 July.

RECOMMENDED that the Council adopts the Asset Management Plan subject to any changes that may be agreed at this Council Meeting.

Background Papers: Letter from Government Office for the East of England dated 19 June, 2003.

ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

CONTENTS

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Corporate objectives
- 3 Organisational arrangements
- 4 Property Data Management
- 5 Consultation on Assets
- 6 Asset Management Action Plan
- 7 Asset Register – Key Statistical Information
- 8 Performance Indicators

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this Plan is to set out the arrangements and action plan for the property assets of Uttlesford District Council.
- 1.2 Uttlesford District Council serves a population of 70,000. The District is comparatively large in area at 64,000ha. The asset base is small and predominantly held for operational direct service purposes. The most significant asset is the housing stock currently around 2,975 properties though reducing through Right to Buy at around 40/45 properties per annum. The only commercial property held is Golds Nurseries Business Park held on a 25 year full repairing lease with 6 years left to run.
- 1.3 Two new leisure centres are being constructed at Stansted and Great Dunmow with completion expected at the end of August.
- 1.4 The main Council offices are situated in Saffron Walden and there are two Community Information Centres at Thaxted and Great Dunmow with the latter being more comprehensive in service provision.
- 1.5 The Council currently provides and shares accommodation with the Citizens Advice Bureau, the Registrar, the Uttlesford Carers and at the Thaxted CIC with the police strengthening our joint approach to community policing.

Key progress 2002/03

- 1.6 The Council made significant progress during the last year. Key achievements were:-
 - But for a small maintenance responsibility, which will terminate at the end of August with the completion of the new leisure centre at Great Dunmow, all of the Council's leisure centres will be managed and maintained by Leisure Connection as a result of our Public Finance Initiative (PFI). This arrangement is contracted to continue for 32 years.
 - Rationalisation of office accommodation with the relocation of the planning department from Great Dunmow to Saffron Walden. The former offices at Great Dunmow are in the process of being let. There are estimated savings of £50,000 and improved corporate working will benefit service users.
 - A lottery bid of £378,000 was awarded for the restoration of Bridge End Gardens, historically important, though neglected, gardens located on the north side of Saffron Walden. Additionally funding has been secured from the Lindbury Trust (£100,000), Saffron Walden Town Council (£35,000), other local benefactors (£12,000) as well as from the Council (£92,500) plus other contributions towards to the cost of works completed to date.
 - A comprehensive survey of Council housing was undertaken in accordance with the Decent Homes Action Plan and a programme of works is being developed to respond to the survey findings.
 - A review of access and facilities for people with disabilities was undertaken on all Council buildings which are open to the public. An action plan has been prepared which specifies improvements to be undertaken prior to

October 2004, the date when physical barriers are required to be removed under provisions contained within the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

- A similar review was undertaken on all Polling Stations within the Uttlesford District (not the Parliamentary Constituency) and, as a result of this, the majority of them were made accessible for people with disabilities. At the recent District Council Elections, the Uttlesford Area Access Group undertook a further review of Polling Stations and this is at present being evaluated. It is intended to produce an action plan specifying improvements to make all Polling Stations accessible by October 2004.

E-Government

- 1.7 The Council's aim is to improve the quality of life for the people of Uttlesford by providing efficient and responsive services for all. We will support this aim by making all relevant services available electronically by 31 December 2005. We will use ICT (information communications technology) to achieve strategic priorities and help address some of the biggest challenges facing the Council.
- 1.8 By 2005, we will provide comprehensive on-line services through Internet access, which will be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. However, not all citizens will choose to use the new service delivery channels. We will therefore retain and, wherever possible, improve telephone and face to face contacts with the Council's customers. In particular, we will use ICT to strengthen the services provided at Community Information Centres. We will also use ICT to support home visits to the housebound.

2 Corporate Objectives

- 2.1 A Community Plan was approved in June 2003 and a Local Strategic Partnership is in place to deliver it. Its key themes are reflected in the Council's key objectives. These are:
- To safeguard the environment and enhance it for future generations
 - To manage the economy to meet the needs of the whole community
 - To improve the health of our community and ensure Uttlesford remains a safe place to live
 - To ensure the choice of homes better meets our community's needs
 - To ensure better access for all in our community to services and jobs
- 2.2 The above are being developed further following the approval of a Quality of Life Plan 2003-07 by the new Administration in June 2003. The key themes of the new Council are:-
- Strong community leadership
 - More openness through public scrutiny
 - Improve access to services
 - Protect the environment and character of the District
 - Increase recycling
 - Promote tourism and green leisure opportunities
 - Encourage low cost housing
 - Develop better opportunities for young people

2.3 The efficient management of all corporate assets will in future be directly informed by these themes. This Asset Management Plan embraces the range of other plans approved by the Council to deliver its priorities. They include:-

- Community Plan
- Capital Strategy
- Best Value Performance Plan
- Housing Strategy
- I.T. Strategy
- Leisure and Cultural Strategy

They are further developed in service plans for each of the Council's services.

2.4 The Council has also agreed the following six principles that underpin the strategic objectives and service delivery of the authority.

- Caring We care for our customers, our employees and environment
- Partnership We work as a team with our partners for the good of the community
- Communication We listen to our customers and our employees and keep them informed
- Services We work to provide our customers with the services they require at a price they can afford
- Flexibility We adapt to new ideas and make use of better ways of doing things
- Performance We review our performance and services regularly

2.5 In the context of the above the Council's key objective for its property portfolio is:-

- To use property which supports and enhances service delivery to customers.

2.6 As part of achieving this objective the Council accepts that:

- Property ownership may not be critical to service delivery
- Property should have a positive contribution to service delivery; if not its use should be reviewed, changed or discontinued

2.7 In delivering the above the Council will ensure the following:-

- Property is suitable, sufficient, in good condition and maintainable utilising reasonable resources
- Asset management activity reflects best practice.
- Property is secured in the most appropriate cost effective way.
- Opportunities for partnership are explored and utilised.

3 Organisational Arrangements

3.1 The following sets out organisational arrangements for asset management within the Council:-

- Resources Committee has responsibility, amongst other things, for "monitoring the use of the Council's assets and resources, the financial health of the council and expenditure against budget allocations, including the total

level of expenditure of the Council and reporting to the Council as necessary". It is chaired by Councillor Gayler.

- Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for advising on the policy for the Council's property portfolio (to the Resources Committee), operational performance and monitoring. It is chaired by Councillor Flack.
- Corporate Property Officer (CPO) is David Demery, Architect and Property Advisor. His responsibilities include:-
 - preparation of the Asset Management Plan and its links with the Capital Strategy
 - maintenance of the non-housing property register
 - data collection to assist performance management
 - monitoring Best Value reviews and service plans to ensure due consideration to asset planning
 - identification of under use or surplus assets in consultation with Heads of Service
 - arrange meetings of the Asset Management Group on a regular basis
 - liaison with outside agencies as appropriate on joint use of assets
- Asset Management Group consists of CPO and representatives from Finance (Michael Dellow), Legal (Jacqui Harrison), Housing (Roz Millership), Planning (Jeremy Pine) and Personnel (Carole Hughes). Its terms of reference is:-
 - to ensure property decisions are consistent with strategic direction and service requirements
 - to identify opportunities for innovation income generation or cost reduction
 - to review acquisitions and disposals
 - to co-ordinate maintenance programmes
 - to review and revise performance measurement
 - to identify unused and underused assets

3.2 The Council's corporate policy function has recently been enhanced by the appointment of a Performance Manager. In addition the Council has appointed an Interim Director – Strategic Development on a temporary basis to develop strategic direction and enhance corporate working.

3.3 The Asset Management Plan results from the work of the Asset Management Group. It is recommended to the Resources Committee for decision. It is subject to scrutiny and performance monitoring by the Scrutiny Committee.

Asset Register

3.4 The Council's Asset Registrar is the Director of Resources. Comprehensive non-housing property register is publicly available through the Council's website.

Performance on Asset Management

<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	(a) Purpose
Corporate Property Officer	Asset Management Group	Every 2 months	monitoring programming performance
	Corporate Management Team	Quarterly	monitoring, performance prioritising
	Resources Committee	6 months, or as necessary	policy development programme approval
	Scrutiny Committee	6 months, or as necessary	monitoring, performance
Asset Management Group	Senior Management Team	Quarterly	monitoring performance information exchange
Resources Committee	Council	Annual	approval of Asset Management Plan

4 Property Data Management

- 4.1 Asset value at March 2003 was £2.46m for all property. Comprehensive records exist of all major property, which includes condition surveys from which maintenance programmes are developed. Key information includes:-
- condition surveys of all major buildings with costed future investment requirements for maintenance
 - condition survey of the housing stock with costed future investment requirements for maintenance.
 - utilities services costs
 - up to date 'terrier' providing general property related information on holdings and leases.
 - valuation statements for insurance purposes for all of its operational property assets.
- 4.2 The Council's expenditure on maintenance at 78% planned and 22% response is better than the guideline of 70/30%.
- 4.3 Costs are high in relation to energy use, cleaning and caretaking, water and sewerage, buildings insurance and repair and maintenance. There are explanations associated with this. These are in relation to the utilisation and conversion of a listed hospital building for the Council's main offices, and the cost benefit of centralising the Council's administration in one building. Costs will need to be further scrutinised.
- 4.4 Following a comprehensive examination of the information held on the terrier during 2001 there is now certainty on the validity of information held as property records.

Protocols have been established to ensure that as property information changes that information is incorporated into the record so as to ensure its accuracy is retained.

- 4.5 Unique property reference numbers have been established which relate to the financial control codes used for determining budgets and expenditure.

5 Consultations on assets – performance and option appraisal

- 5.1 The Corporate Management Team (CMT) meets every 2 weeks. The Senior Management Team (SMT) comprised of all Heads of Services meets every 6 weeks. Each Head of Service is required to hold meetings with their staff. Minutes of meetings are circulated. The Leader/Chief Executive hold open forum meetings with staff. The arrangements for consultation and feedback on asset management exists to take the dialogue through to every part of the organisation.
- 5.2 The CMT will be briefed quarterly and the SMT will also be consulted, also quarterly. The Asset Management Plan will be available to all on the internet. There will be a dialogue initiated by the CPO with CMT and SMT, which will relate to the effective and efficient use of current assets and how this may need to change to meet future service demands. Each Head of Service will be the link and advocate for all within their section on asset management issues.
- 5.3 All Heads of Service will be advised by the Corporate Property Officer of the costs of assets in relation to their service delivery and the impact on costs of any change to the provision of assets as Heads of Service seek to improve efficiency.
- 5.4 Best Value reviews will be required to consider the utilisation and appropriateness of the property asset supporting service delivery. Any relevant issues relating to the Council's assets as a result of audit reports will be brought to the attention of the CPO.
- 5.5 The most significant recent capital projects have centred on leisure development. The need was identified within the Leisure Strategy which resulted from extensive information and consultation with the local community and regional bodies. It became a key Council priority. Various options were evaluated including lottery funding and the public private finance initiative (PFI). After detailed assessments with the assistance of external advisers the Council decided on the PFI. The specific requirements within the leisure centres resulted from further consultation with the community and clubs as to their requirements. When completed and in use there will be continuing dialogue with the community to ensure service delivery is relevant and appropriate to customer expectation. There is a commitment to a best value review of the operation of the new leisure centres in 2004/05.
- 5.6 The District Council now has two information centres located away from its head office at Saffron Walden. These resulted from community needs to access information more locally and involved partnership working with other agencies.
- 5.7 Most recently the centralisation of the Council's administration at Saffron Walden resulted from extensive consultation. It was initiated through a best value review process. Different options for disposal of the surplus office accommodation were considered. It also involves on-going implementation of initiatives such as flexitime and homeworking which have property implications, as well as work life balance issues for staff. A review of the new arrangements will take place during this year.

5.8 Last year the Council discussed with Town and Parish Councils the transfer of local open space to them as the more appropriate local body to manage such facilities. It was only possible to agree the transfer of one such site in Saffron Walden. The Council will continue to seek to transfer local facilities to local councils.

5.9 Consultation and Council priorities have informed the action plan which follows.

6 Asset Management Action Plan

6.1 For a number of years the Council has followed a no growth budget strategy. Consequently there has been no significant capital programme for new build property or acquisition. However, through innovative initiatives significant progress has been achieved in providing leisure centres through PFI funding and historic garden restoration through a successful lottery bid, with benefactor support in both instances. The new Administration elected in May is currently developing its priorities which may well impact on asset expenditure in 2004 onwards. As result of existing commitments the following key projects have been identified during this year. Some actions may well lead to expenditure plans in 2004/05. The new Administration will consider these and others in the autumn this year.

- Dunmow depot relocation
- option appraisal of Dunmow depot site and proposals for its redevelopment
- new storage arrangements for the Museum

The Action Plan overleaf does not separately identify maintenance works. This is set out in Section 7 on page 10.

Property	Action	By Whom (lead officer(s))	Target Date	Policy basis	Budget Implications
Offices	Review operational use following recent centralisation, including car parking, and put forward appropriate changes	CPO	Dec 2003	-Corporate property -Human resources	To be included in 2004/5 budget if required.
Community Information Centres (CIC)	Review service provision at GD CIC and put forward proposals that relate to customer requirements	CPO Head of IT	Dec 2003	-Corporate property -IT strategy	Probably none.
Depots, SW, GD and Newport	Prepare for relocation of GD depot to a more appropriate location and maximise use of existing to the benefit of the local community	CPO Head of Planning and Building Surveying Head of Environmental Services	Options appraisal report – Sept 2003. Approval of proposals and submit planning application – March 2004	- Corporate property - Local Plan	Potential cost of new depot £450k in 2005/06. Potential capital receipt on existing site 2005/06.
Public Toilets	- Prepare refurbishment plans Hill St., SW - Dispose of surplus toilets, Thaxted	CPO Head of Environmental Services	- Report Nov 2003 - Report Jan 2004	- Corporate Property - Health/access to services	£45k estimated for 2004/05.
Leisure Centres	- Open new centres - Monitor operations and service delivery	Head of Community and Leisure	- Aug 2003 - Report March 2004	- Corporate Property - Leisure and Cultural Strategy	UDC element of PFI project £4.1m.
Museum	- Internal reorganisation - New storage facilities to meet demand for more space	CPO Museum Curator	- Options – Nov 2005 - March 2004	- Corporate Property - Museum plan - Best value review	To be considered in 2004/05 budget if required.
Guildhall, Thaxted	Rationalise arrangements on usage to the benefit of customers, maintenance with partners	CPO	March 2004	- Corporate Property - Leisure and Cultural Strategy - Local Plan	Probably none
Skateboard Park, Stansted Mountfitchet	Contribute agreed financial support when project progresses.	Head of Community and Leisure Services	Dec 2003 subject to progress of project	- Corporate Property - Leisure and Cultural Strategy	£19k

Day Centres	Best value review of their role, usage within the community	Best value review team	Jan 2004	- Corporate Property - Access to services	Await outcome of BV review
Bridge End Gardens, SW	Implement agreed restoration plan for the year	CPO Head of Community and Leisure Services	March 2004	Leisure and Cultural Strategy	£508k inc partners contribution
Golds Industrial estate, Elsenham	Complete refurbishment. Maximise occupancy. Maintenance	Head of Housing	Quarterly reports	Legal obligation which the Council cannot break. This followed a comprehensive appraisal in 2002/03	Revenue expenditure
Agricultural land, Ashdon	Secure planning permission for affordable housing on most of site and start development	Head of Planning and Building Surveying Head of Housing	March 2004	- Corporate Property - Local plan - Housing strategy	
Allotment land (Cemetery allotment), SW	Complete transfer of land for development	CPO Head of Planning and Building Surveying	Dec 2003	- Corporate Property - Local plan - Housing strategy	£1.3m capital receipt
Allotments	Maximise usage Review letting arrangements	CPO Head of Environmental Services	Feb 2004	- Corporate Property - Leisure and Cultural strategy	Probably none
Disabled access to public buildings	Implement agreed works to meet statutory requirements by Oct 2004. Assess facilities within Council premises	Chief Building Surveyor	March 2004	- Access strategy	£90k including reinstatements
Parcel of land, Thaxted Road, SW	Consider alternative uses to maximise its use	CPO Head of Environmental Services	Dec 2003	- Corporate Property	Need to await evaluation

The summary of the three year capital programme is set out below.

	03/04	04/05	05/06
General reinstatement of maintenance of all non housing property	£90k	£90k	£90k
Capital Projects - Bridge End Gardens - Skate board park - Public convenience refurbishment - Dunmow depot	£508k* £19k	£135k* £45k £450k	
Capital Receipts - Harris Yard - Dunmow depot site – capital receipt anticipated	(£1,300k)		

* Heritage Lottery and other grant assistance to funding.

Transitional fund expenditure possible, programme and expenditure to be determined. £2,500k

7 Asset Register – Key Statistical Information

Property Assets	Area m ²	L-hold/F-hold	Repair Costs		Condition Category				Comment
			Response	Planned	A	B	C	D	
Offices									
London Road	3,500	FH	10,000	22,110	✓				
Lodge House	80	FH	350	0	✓				
Dunmow	1130	FH	8,100	14,930		✓			
Depot									
Dunmow	266	FH	1,500	370		✓			
Saffron Walden	75	FH	2,280	410		✓			
Newport Building 2	184	FH				✓			Included within HRA
Public conveniences									
Saffron Walden	50	FH	1,700	0			✓		Note refurbishment works planned 2004
Dunmow	45	FH	480	0	✓				
Thaxted	45	FH	480	0	✓				
Felsted	9	LH	400			✓			
Saffron Walden x 2	N/A	FH lease to operating							Standing on UDC land provided and managed privately
Stansted	N/A	FH lease to operating							
Thaxted	9	FH							Redundant disposal

									being investigated
Day Centres									
Dunmow	300	FH	520	550	✓				BV Review 2003/04
Thaxted	150	FH	580	820	✓				
Takeley	120	FH	500	1,220		✓			
Saffron Walden	250	FH	760	3,220	✓				
Stansted	160	FH	670	2,000	✓				
Leisure facilities									
Lord Butler		FH			N/A				Leased to operator on full repairing terms
Dunmow Leisure		FH			N/A				
Stansted Romeera		FH			N/A				
Saffron Walden Turpins		FH	500	2,050	✓				Leased to Bowls Club on internal repair terms
Helena Romanes		LH		4,990				✓	Arrangements terminate end of August
Car Parks									
G/D Angel Lane		FH	400	0			✓		
Chequers Lane		FH	480	0			✓		
White Street		FH	950	0				✓	Site development imminent resulting in larger car park provided by developer
Saffron Walden Catons Lane		FH	480			✓			
The Common		FH	480	1,000		✓			
Swan Meadow Inc coach park		FH	1,240	12,000	✓				
Rose & Crown		LH	480	500		✓			

Waitrose		FH & LH	2,000	5,000		✓			LH over the store
Debden Road			240	0			✓		Small free car park
Stansted Crafton Green			290			✓			Operated on behalf of Stansted PC
Lower Street		FH	480		✓				
Thaxted Margaret Street		FH	480	0	✓				
Museum	980	LH	2,750	1,500		✓			
Annexe	60	LH				✓			
40 Castle Street	115	LH			✓				
Castle	N/A	FH					✓		Listed monument
Thaxted Guildhall		LH	250		✓				Leased from Essex County managed by managing committee maintained by UDC
Community Info Centre, Thaxted		LH	0	0	✓				Shared facilities with tourist info and police
Tourist Info Centre, SW		LH	350	1,500		✓			
Ashdon Road Agricultural land		FH			N/A				Some disposed of to Housing Association remainder disposal being explored
Golds Nurseries		LH	1,250	4,250 exc refurbishment works			✓		Leasehold – onerous terms dispose if possible as soon as possible. Major refurbishment

									ent cost funded out of revenue
Golds Nurseries		LH					✓		Leasehold with six years to run
Markets							✓		
Angel Lane, G/D		FH			N/A		✓		Subject to lease
Bridgend Gardens			1,250	3,830			✓		Significant reinstatement being undertaken
Misc Gardens including Swan Meadow Pond			2,250	9,000					
Cemetery		FH	500	4,120					
Allotments									54 no allotments
TOTAL			23,190	80,743					

8 Performance Indicators (PIs)

P.I 1A % floor space in condition Category A to D

A	4,645 m ²	60%
B	2,820 m ²	37%
C	50 m ²	3%

A = Good
B = Satisfactory
C = Poor
D = Imminent failure

P.I 1B Backlog maintenance

Backlog maintenance is not a factor within the General Fund Portfolio. Necessary maintenance work can be/is funded from the General Maintenance Reinstatement Budget running year to year of about £90k.

P.I 2 Non operational property held for investment

No properties are held for this purpose.

P.I 3 Total management costs/per sq.m for the property portfolio

No specific charging code is in place but indicative cost is £10/ m² excluding costs associated with valuation work.

P.I 4 Energy costs including water and maintenance costs/per m²

Maintenance cost per sq m	£16.26
Energy cost per sq m	£ 7.58

Water cost per sq m £ 5.60
CO² Emissions per sq m 75.4kg

P.I 5A % ± 5% on budget 2 projects
 Office Relocation 100%
 Leisure Centres 100%

P.I 5B % ± 5% on time 2 projects
 Office Relocation 100%
 Leisure Centres 100%

Local Property Performance Indicators
Maintenance Response 2002/03

	Target time	Performance
Emergency Works (attend to and resolve all repair requests)	24 hrs	100%
Urgent Works	3 days	90.8%
Routine repair request	21 days	100%

Committee: FULL COUNCIL
Date: 22 July 2003
Agenda Item No: 9
Title: Appointment of Registration Officer/Returning Officer
Author: Michael Perry (01799) 510416

Summary

- 1 This report is to inform Members of the Council's duties under the Representation of the People Act 1983 ("the Act") and to recommend action pending the appointment of a new Chief Executive.

Background

- 2 Section 8 of the Act requires district councils to appoint one of their officers to be the Registration Officer for the Council. Section 35 of the Act requires district councils to appoint one of their officers to be the Returning Officer of the Council for the purpose of local elections and parish elections within the district.
- 3 The former Chief Executive was both Registration Officer and Returning Officer for the Council. The job description for the new Chief Executive requires the appointee to act in both roles. In the interim however both positions are vacant.
- 4 The Registration Officer is responsible for the provision, maintenance and publication of the Electoral Register. This is an ongoing function. The Returning Officer is responsible for conducting local elections and parish elections including by-elections. In the absence of a properly appointed officer for both of these positions the Council is unable to legally perform these functions. The Council therefore needs to appoint a Registration Officer and Returning Officer. As the appointments are usually held by the Chief Executive it is considered appropriate for the Acting Chief Executive to act in these roles until such time as the new Chief Executive takes up appointment.

RECOMMENDED that the Acting Chief Executive be appointed as Registration Officer and Returning Officer for the Council pending the appointment of a new Chief Executive and the appointee taking up post.

Background Papers: None

Committee: FULL COUNCIL
Date: 22 JULY 2003
Agenda Item No: 10
Title: Development Control and Licensing Committees Terms of Reference
Author: Michael Perry (01799) 510416

Summary

- 1 This report is to propose terms of reference and delegation schemes for the new Development Control and Licensing Committees, the principle of which has already been agreed, and to recommend that Members approve the same.

Background

- 2 At the Annual Council meeting on 20 May the Council resolved to form a separate Licensing Committee to deal with all licensing functions of the Council with effect from 10 September 2003 including (when the Licensing Bill becomes law) liquor licensing. However no terms of reference or delegation were agreed at the time. As a result the licensing functions of the Council still fall within the remit of the Development Control and Licensing Committee.
- 3 In order to give effect to the decision taken at Annual Council it is necessary for there to be separate terms of reference for both the Development Control and Licensing Committees. Attached at Appendix A are draft terms of reference and a delegation scheme for the Development Control Committee. This follows the current format for the combined Committee but omitting all references to the licensing function. Amendments to the delegation scheme approved at Development Control Committee on 7 July have been incorporated at paragraphs 15 to 18 under the heading "Delegation to Chief Officers"
- 4 Appendix B is the draft terms of reference and a delegation scheme for the Licensing Committee. Again this follows the current format for the combined Committee but omitting all references to the development control function. Certain licensing functions which no longer fall to be performed by the Council have also been omitted.

RECOMMENDED:- that Members approve the terms of reference and delegation schemes for the Development Control Committee and the Licensing Committee to have effect from 10 September 2003

Background Papers: Members Handbook

APPENDIX A

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

A Terms of Reference

- 1 The Council's regulatory functions under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, the Highways Act 1980 and related legislation.

B Terms of Delegation to Committee

- 1 The determination of planning applications, enforcement matters and other relevant matters.
- 2 All matters relating to the diversion, extinguishment and creation of public rights of way under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Highways Act 1980.
- 3 The grant of deemed planning consent for District Council proposals under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Regulations 1992, subject to any proposal in respect of which the Committee is minded not to pass the necessary resolution to grant deemed consent being referred to the Environment and Transport Committee for consideration and determination.
- 4 To decide on all other issues concerned with regulating the development and use of land as part of the town and country planning system.
- 5 Determine the confirmation of Tree Preservation Orders the subject of formal objections.
- 6 To deal with consultations on traffic management and related matters and goods vehicle operators licences.

C Delegation to Chief Officers

Subject to criteria determined by Members where appropriate, and in respect of matters within the purview of the Committee, the Chief Officers, and officers nominated by them, will exercise the following powers and duties in accordance with the Council's procedure rules (including contracts) and Financial Regulations:-

- 1 Decide whether:-
 - (a) applications are "county matters"
 - (b) planning permission is required for development, including Section 64 applications
 - (c) environmental impact assessment is required
 - (d) Listed Building Consent is necessary
 - (e) express consent to display advertisements is required.
- 2 Make comments on:-
 - (a) minor proposals submitted by government departments, Essex County Council and statutory undertakers

- (b) minor proposals submitted for consultation by an adjoining planning authority
 - (c) consultations from the Forestry Commission
 - (d) consultations from Diocese of Chelmsford on proposals under the Pastoral Measures Act 1983
- 3 Determine whether prior approval is required for agricultural or telecommunications development.
- 4 Direct that an outline planning application shall not be considered without the submission of further details, pursuant to Article 7(2) of the Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995.
- 5 Determine applications for:-
- (a) minor developments (eg householder, changes of use,)
 - (b) conversion of an existing dwelling into 2 units
 - (c) minor alterations to previously approved plans and conditions
 - (d) vehicular and pedestrian access
 - (e) changes of use from A1 (shop) to A2 (financial and professional services) and of floors above shops in town centres from residential or vacant to A2 or B1 (offices)
 - (f) agricultural developments not involving the accommodation of livestock operations under intensive conditions
 - (g) removal of agricultural occupancy conditions where supported by ADAS and previously advertised for 6 months
 - (h) temporary caravan or mobile home for agricultural occupation
 - (i) overhead power lines
 - (j) advertisements
 - (k) renewal of permissions where the circumstances are the same, or very similar, to those pertaining at the previous grant of permission.
 - (l) Replacement dwellings within DLs
 - (m) Change of use within DLs
 - (n) Up to 2 dwellings within DLs in Parish Council areas and up to 5 dwellings within DLs for Town Council areas
 - (o) Refusal of dwellings outside DLs
 - (p) Refusals of residential barn conversions
 - (q) Appropriate commercial (usually within class B1) barn conversions
 - (r) Certificates of Lawful Use and Development
 - (s) Refusals for telecommunications developments
 - (t) Minor tourist related developments
- 6 Approve matters reserved by conditions, e.g. materials, landscaping schemes, etc (excepting details of new dwellings or other major buildings).
- 7 Make orders for the diversion, extinguishment and creation of public rights of way where there are no unresolved objections.
- 8 Issue revised decision notices for applications previously determined.
- 9 Determine:-
- (a) confirmation of Tree Preservation Orders where formal objections have been received

- (b) application and notification to carry out works to trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order within a conservation area, other than those determined by Committee.
 - (c) Hedgerow Removal Notices.
- 10 Deal with dangerous trees under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 and to recharge the costs to owners.
- 11 (a) Determine applications and issue notices under the Building Act 1984, the Building Regulations as amended, and allied matters under the B.20 Public Health Acts, Clean Air Act 1956 and the Essex Act 1987, and any other relevant legislation.
- (b) Deal with the operation of the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 1998 and any amendments thereto, along with the Council's scheme for the recovery of charges for Building Regulations purposes.
- 12 Deal with the operation of the Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications and Deemed Applications) Regulations.
- 13 (a) Issue:-
- (i) Requisitions for Information
 - (ii) Planning Contravention Notices
 - (iii) Notices of Entry, and
 - (iv) Building Preservation Notices
 - (v) Breach of Condition Notices
- and take any necessary action arising therefrom
- (b) Take enforcement action to secure compliance with conditions of all permissions approved by the Development Control Committee
- (c) Specify time limits for compliance with an Enforcement Notice.
- 14 Institute legal proceedings for:-
- (a) failure to comply with any of the statutory notices covered in 13 above
 - (b) unauthorised display of advertisements
 - (c) breaches of the Building Act and Regulations
- 15 The issue and service of Article 4 Directions in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services and, if available, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee
- 16 The issue and service of enforcement notices in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services and, if available, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee
- 17 The necessary procedure for the service of injunctions in conjunction with the Head of Legal Services and, if available, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee
- 18 The submission of objections to the Traffic Commissioners or other licensing authority for applications for Goods Vehicle Operators Licences in conjunction with

the Head of Legal Services and, if available, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Development Control Committee

- Notes:
- 1 The Head of Planning and Building Surveying may at his discretion refer applications to the Development Control Committee.
 - 2 The Weekly List will indicate which applications are to be decided by the Committee.
 - 3 Any Member may request that an application delegated to the Head of Planning and Building Surveying be considered by the Development Control Committee.

APPENDIX B

LICENSING COMMITTEE

A Terms of Reference

The functions of the Council in the control of services, persons, vehicles and premises requiring to be licensed or registered.

B Terms of Delegation to Committee

To be responsible for and exercise powers in respect of the licensing and registration of the following matters:-

- 1 Acupuncture, tattooing, ear-piercing and electrolysis.
- 2 Animal boarding establishments, dangerous wild animals, dog breeding, performing animals, pet shops, riding establishments and zoos.
- 3 Caravan sites.
- 4 Entertainment, including cinemas, private places of entertainment, public entertainments, indoor sporting events, and plays.
- 5 Food hawkers, street traders and late night refreshment houses.
- 6 Game and game dealers.
- 7 Houses in multiple occupation.
- 8 Dairies.
- 9 Sex establishments.
- 10 The Licensing Act 1964 and any amendments thereto or replacement thereof.
- 11 Hackney carriage and private hire drivers, vehicles and operators and all ancillary matters.
- 12 To have Liaison Meetings with the Uttlesford Taxi Drivers' Association and other appropriate associations and act thereon.

C Delegation to Chief Officers

Subject to criteria determined by Members where appropriate, and in respect of matters within the purview of the Committee, the Chief Officers, and officers nominated by them, will exercise the following powers and duties in accordance with the Council's procedure rules (including contracts) and Financial Regulations:-

- 1 Determination of applications for licences and for registration of premises, persons and vehicles; and the amendment or transfer of such licences.

- 2 Refusal, revocation or suspension of licences and registrations.
- 3 Issue of statutory notices and certificates.
- 4 Institution of legal proceedings for breaches of licences or statutory provisions.
- 5 Observations on applications made under the Licensing Act 1964.
- 6 The issue of statutory notices, registrations and certificates in respect of charitable collections and gaming.

Committee: COUNCIL MEETING
Date: 22 July 2003
Agenda Item: 11
Title: ESSEX PROCUREMENT AGENCY
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510402

Summary

- 1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for Uttlesford District Council to join the Essex Procurement Agency.

Background

- 2 Procurement aims to help the authority make informed decisions about how to deliver our corporate and service objectives most effectively. Specifically procurement is important to the authority because of its Impact on spend and savings, on service delivery, on corporate and service strategic objectives and to ensure that a regulatory framework is followed.
- 3 To obtain the maximum benefits that flow from a comprehensive procurement process the Essex Chief Executives Group on the 20 March 2003 considered a proposal to establish Essex Procurement Agency. The Essex Chief Executives widely supported the proposal and officers were requested to prepare detailed costings and to outline the benefits of such an agency.
- 4 The Essex Procurement Agency will offer a range of benefits including:
 - The economies of scale of greater purchasing power
 - Specialist skills in contract procurement
 - Opportunities for greater partnership working
 - Research and development opportunities
 - Consultation and management expertise
 - Opportunities to develop recycling options for the future
- 5 The Agency will be based in Harlow and will be funded initially for three years. The costs of the agency in Year One (2004/05) will be £142,500 in Year Two (2005/06) will be £179,500 and in Year Three (2006/07) will be £201,500.

- 6 Uttlesford District Council spends around £3.5m per year on Procurement and this is split into: Premises Costs, Transport, Supplies and Services. If the authority joined the Agency our subscription costs will be: Year One £8,000 Year Two £8,100 and Year Three £8,200. The benefits of joining the Agency should result in savings to the authority of these sums per year.
- 7 Membership of the Essex Procurement Agency has been discussed by the Corporate Procurement Working Group and a verbal update on the work of Corporate Procurement Group will be delivered to Council.

Financial Implications

- 8 The costs of joining the Essex Procurement Agency during the three years 2004/5 to 2006/07 inclusive need to be included in the draft budget for 2004/05.

RECOMMENDED that the Council:

- (1) Become a member of the Essex Procurement Agency during the three years 2004/05 to 2006/07 inclusive
- (2) That the subscription fees for the three year membership are included in the budgets of the authority for the relevant years.