

Committee: Environment
Date: 9 November 2004
Agenda Item No: 8
Title: Draft Capital Programme 2005-06
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Summary

- 1 In previous years it has been the practice to report the capital programme and funding details only to the Resources Committee. This year, individual Policy Committees have the opportunity to comment on and propose changes to the draft programme.
- 2 This approach is consistent with resolution of the Resources Committee at its meeting on 23 September 2004 that a review of the Capital Programme takes place and a report be taken to all relevant Committees in the November cycle of meetings.

Capital Strategy

- 3 Members will be aware that the Council is required to prepare a Capital Strategy 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 the Council's key objectives. Council approved the Strategy for submission to the Government Office for the East of England (GO-East) in July 2003. GO-East assessed the Strategy as "Good" meaning that the Council will not have to submit a Strategy in the future.

Prioritisation

- 4 The Capital Strategy requires all capital bids to be evaluated by a Capital Strategy Officer Group. Proposed capital schemes and projects are assessed by the Group against
 - The Council's key objectives and priorities.
 - Service Plans and Best Value Reviews.
 - The Prudential Code for Capital Finance.
 - Public Consultation Responses.

The Group are also required to consider:

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

- 5 The prioritisation described above has not yet been applied to the bids identified in this report but it is considered that seeking input from Members at a relatively early stage will inform the process and help to minimise late submissions.

Asset Management Plan

- 6 Items relating to the acquisition of or improvement to Council buildings and other facilities are also included in the Asset Management Plan, a preliminary draft of which has been submitted to Go-East for initial appraisal.

Proposed Draft Programme

- 7 The detailed figures are attached at Appendix CP1.

Cycle Track

At its meeting on 24 June 2004 the Resources Committee agreed that a cycle track linking Saffron Walden with Audley End be constructed in partnership with Essex County Council. The Committee was informed that following discussions with relevant local communities regarding the exact route, the work would be undertaken by the County Council during 2005-06 and 2006-07. Accordingly, the Committee resolved that the scheme back by one year.

Linking Green Lanes

At the same meeting the Resources Committee were advised that discussions were being held with Essex County Council to identify which routes could benefit from additional funding to give them green lane status. This process however would not be completed in 2004-05 and the Committee resolved that the scheme be put back by one year.

Upgrade of Recycling Bring Sites

A review of Uttlesford's 50 public recycling sites was carried out in order to assess a number of factors. Firstly, their viability in terms of location, availability and tonnage gained. Secondly, the range of materials accepted and space provision for additional containers. Thirdly, their appearance in terms of cleanliness, litter and possible subsidence. Finally, their prominence and recognition in terms of signage and on-site information provision. Following this review, a series of recommendations were made to address these factors including the generation of additional sites and containers in poorly serviced areas, the instigation of a regular container cleaning regime, the installation of screening and hard-standing where required and the provision of directional signage and on-site display boards to display District recycling information.

Trade Waste Bin Replacements

The total number of "trade bins" (includes some in domestic use) is 669, of these 439 are metal bins in a very poor condition and no longer repairable, to minimise the need for future repairs we have moved to plastic "Eurobins" of which we have 230. The minimum number metal bins we need to replace urgently is 150 at a cost of £132 per bin. This can be achieved by a capital investment of £20,000 and then a programme of replacement should be established to replace the remainder on a rolling programme.

Hill Street Convenience – Refurbishment

Although there was provision of £40,000 in the Capital Programme for these works, it was reported to the Resources Committee on 31 August that the lowest tender received was for £71,000. The Committee resolved to approve funding of £71,000 to undertake the refurbishment in 2004-05.

Depot Replacement – Great Dunmow

It is anticipated that land will be acquired in 2005-06 at a cost of £150,000 and that construction work will be carried out in 2006-07 at a cost of £400,000.

Mobile Recycling Unit

When preparing the Capital Programme in January 2004 it was anticipated that the necessary funding from Essex County Council would be received in 2004-05. In fact funding was provided in 2003-04 and the therefore the Unit was acquired in that year.

Saffron Walden Cemetery – Gravestone Works

There a number of gravestones in the cemetery that may be unstable and constituting a health and safety risk. Provision is therefore included in the draft Capital Programme to undertake these works.

Shire Hill Depot Improvements

Various minor works are required to improve the efficiency of the depot.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee considers its 2005-06 draft capital programme as set out in this report and indicates any further schemes and projects that it wishes the Capital Strategy Officer Group to evaluate.

Background Papers: Service Plans, Draft Asset Management Plan