

# Asset Management Plan 2011/12

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### 1. The Council's Core Aims and Objectives

The purpose of this plan is to set out the arrangements for the management of non-housing property assets and how these assets are linked to the strategic objectives.

The strategic objectives are outlined in the following documents.

#### **Corporate Plan 2011 – 2016**

The Council's objectives are:-

- Finance Effectively managing our finances in economically challenging times.
- Partnerships Working to deliver effective and co-ordinated services with partners and others at reduced cost.
- People Supporting our communities, consulting and engaging fairly with staff and customers.
- Environment Protecting and enhancing the environment and keeping communities together.

#### **Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011/12 – 2015/16**

The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) complements the Council's Corporate Action Plan and sets out a clear framework for our financial decision making.

The Corporate Plan makes clear what the Council's priorities are and the MTFS sets out how the financial management process will contribute to delivering these priorities.

The MTFS is revised every six months to reflect the most up to date issues, priorities and pressures faced by the Council.

#### **Asset Management Plan 2011/12**

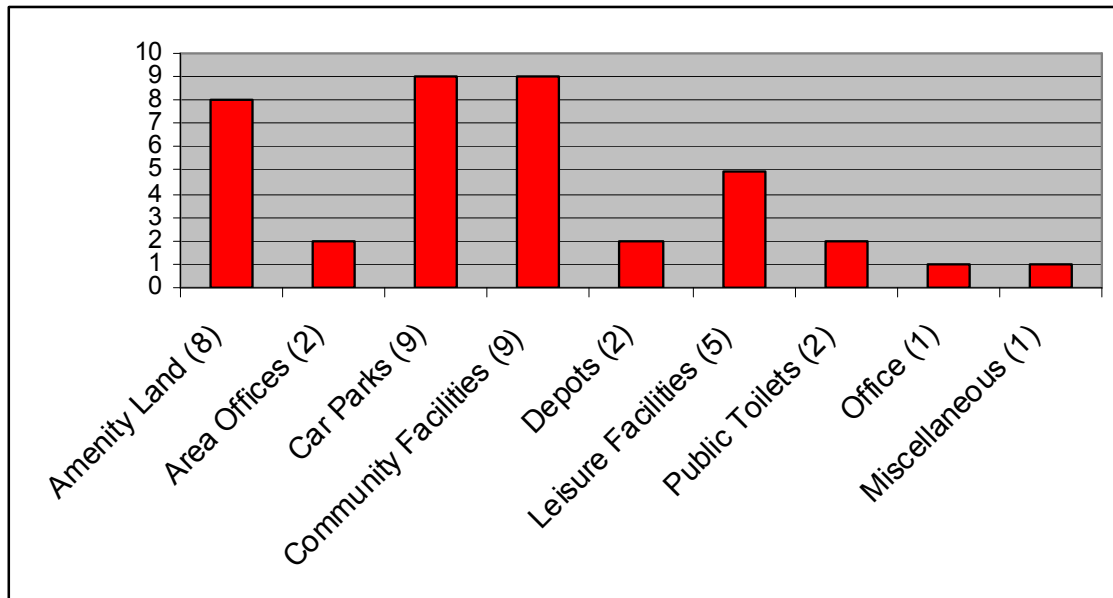
The aim of the Asset Management Plan is to:

- Ensure property decisions are consistent with the strategic direction and service requirements.
- Identify opportunities for innovation, income generation or cost reduction.
- Review the opportunities and benefits of acquisitions and disposal of property.
- Co-ordinate maintenance and other works programmes.
- Review, revise and draw conclusions from performance measurement.
- Identify the need for new assets.
- Identify under performing assets and preferred solutions.

## 2. The Council's Property Portfolio

The Council owns non-housing assets of various types, including council offices, depots, community facilities, car parks and public conveniences.

These are shown below in the bar chart below.



The total capital value of the entire property portfolio for accounting purposes is approximately £25 million.

A complete list of the non-housing assets is attached to this document.

The Council also owns approximately 2,866 council house dwellings and related garage sites. These are covered by the HRA Business Plan and are therefore excluded from this Asset Management Plan.

The Council owns various pieces of housing land. As at March 2011 these are in the process of being catalogued. They will be included in a future iteration of this Asset Management Plan.

### **Performance of Portfolio**

Currently the Council's main operational assets are not entirely meeting its strategic or operational needs. In particular:

1. The depot at Great Dunmow is not fit for purpose due to access issues and inadequate workshop facilities. Options to relocate the vehicle workshop are being considered.

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2. With the transfer of the Revenues and Benefits function to Harlow (approximately 25 staff) the main Council office on Saffron Walden will have spare capacity and options to bring other Public Sector organisations into the building are being looked at.
3. The Lodge House which sits in the grounds of the main Council Office is not in use and an options appraisal has been carried out to explore the potential to let it out commercially.
4. The capacity available in the car park at the main Council Offices needs to be managed because of user pressures which may increase if other organisations locate services at the site.
5. There is further potential for energy management, building on existing achievements.
6. The repairs and renewals spend is currently the responsibility of individual services. It has been identified that this needs to be centralised to improve efficiency.
7. A strategic review of car parks within the district is required and opportunities to improve car parking and town centre facilities need to be explored.
8. Better utilisation of the day centres needs to be explored.

### **Achievements**

The Council has achieved the following during 2010/11: -

- Disposal of offices at Great Dunmow
- Public conveniences in Great Dunmow transferred to the Town Council
- Leasing satellite office in Thaxted and sharing these premises with other Public Sector organisations.
- Cemetery at Saffron Walden transferred to Town Council
- Acquisition of Community Hall at Flitch Green.
- Acquisition of Community Hall, Priors Green, Takeley
- Completed refurbishment of glazed link/conservatory at Council Offices, Saffron Walden
- Energy consultants have been engaged to identify energy efficiency improvements.
- Achieved major reduction in Business Rate liabilities via the rating appeals process e.g. saving of £21,000 per annum on main Council Offices.

### 3. Property Objectives and Expected Outcomes

#### Property Objectives

Within our overall aim of seeking to improve service delivery and at the same time reduce our costs, we have adopted five headline aims and objectives to ensure that the Council's assets are fit for purpose. These are:

1. **Assets must meet the needs of those that use them.** This includes staff, members, visitors, customers and general public, people with disabilities or special needs and other minority groups. It means asking people what they think about our property assets and responding to their needs.
2. **Assets must be affordable.** This means keeping running costs down, prioritising capital spending, full option appraisals incorporating whole life costing (where appropriate) and assessing opportunity costs. It also means making sure that any borrowing for capital works follows a robust business case and can be afforded and that any capital tied up in property, which is not required to meet the Council's objectives is released as soon as possible.
3. **Assets must be safe and comply with the law.** This means ensuring regular surveys and inspections for asbestos, legionella, fire, health & safety etc., as well as physical condition surveys and Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) audits are undertaken.
4. **Assets must contribute to our Corporate Plan.** Ensuring that our property decisions are linked to decisions on other Council resources (staff, IT, finance) and that asset management contributes to our corporate goals and vision. The Council will work in collaboration with partner organisations, including other public bodies and voluntary and community groups, to achieve a strategic approach to asset management across the district.
5. **Assets must be sustainable.** Monitoring and reducing energy consumption and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, ensuring that asset decisions take into account both the local and global environment and make a positive contribution to a sustainable community.

#### Strategic Performance Criteria

Therefore the criteria against which we will judge the performance of the portfolio in the future are

- **Improved fitness for purpose** - Property facilities are appropriate to delivery of the Council's Services. For example the proposed re-provision of the Great Dunmow Depot facility which is currently not fit for purpose.
- **Increased use of shared services** – Working with Partners to deliver Services more effectively and efficiently. For example the satellite office in Thaxted which is shared with the Parish Council, Job Centre Plus, Police Authority and Citizen Advice Bureau.

- **Pursuance of shared use whenever appropriate** – To ensure optimum utilisation of property resources. The Headquarters office premises in Saffron Walden have significant potential spare capacity which could be made available to other public sector organisations.
- **Reduced running costs** – To manage property assets in a cost effective and efficient manner. The Council needs to consider using its office space more efficiently in order to free up space to produce an income stream and reduce running costs.
- **Sustained or improved income generation** – To maximise the income from Council assets to support the Council's finances. Opportunities to generate additional income from existing assets with spare capacity needs to be pursued.
- **Corporate repairs and renewals budget** – Need to ensure condition surveys are annually updated to provide the basis for setting the repairs and renewals budget
- **Realisation of capital receipts from the disposal of surplus assets** – Dispose of assets that are not fit for purpose or surplus to requirements. A review of all non-housing assets will be undertaken to identify any future potential capital receipts.
- **Enhanced environmental sustainability** – To support the Government's goal to reduce CO2 emissions. A number of initiatives are being explored and associated feasibility studies undertaken to identify potential energy saving projects.
- **Meeting statutory obligations** – To continue to comply with statutory obligations in asbestos, electrical testing, access/DDA, legionella, emissions, energy performance, etc.
- **Performance Indicators** - The aim is to create a base of performance indicators to enable improvements and efficiency to be measured over time
  - a) Running costs per meter square
  - b) Square meters per employee
  - c) Co2 emissions from Council Offices
  - d) Backlog maintenance across non-housing assets

#### 4. Corporate Property Management and Governance

This Plan is owned by the Finance and Administration Committee. Following transition to cabinet governance, the Plan shall be owned by the Cabinet. A Portfolio Holder will be allocated responsibility for overseeing and driving forward asset issues.

The Assistant Chief Executive - Finance is responsible for overseeing good asset management on behalf of the Council.

The Capital Officer Working Group will organise work identified in this Plan and will actively keep the Plan under review.

The Cabinet shall receive an annual report on progress with matters identified in the Action Plan and performance relating to the assets.

### 5. Overview of Property Policies and Projects

The Council's corporate asset strategy comprises 2 parts:

#### a) Overall Asset Policies

The following policies will guide decision making on the Council's portfolio in the future.

<b>Asset Transfer</b>	The Council will transfer assets to community groups in appropriate cases, subject to fulfilling key criteria, e.g. willing recipient with the capacity to manage the transferred assets, subsidiarity principle: assets should be managed by the body closest to those benefiting from the facility, UDC should manage those assets that are local strategic facilities.
<b>Co-location</b>	The Council will co-locate with other Public Sector bodies in appropriate cases where it results in improved service delivery, reduced costs and increased income
<b>Data Management</b>	The Council now has all of its assets mapped electronically and will investigate using Braintree District Council's electronic property management system to manage its asset data.
<b>Equalities and Access</b>	The Council will continue to ensure that its buildings are DDA compliant and are accessible to the public.
<b>Maintenance and Repair</b>	<p>The Council will continue ongoing regular investment in its assets via a 5 year planned maintenance programme, which seeks to reduce backlog maintenance with an ongoing balance of reactive and planned expenditure which sustains the portfolio in good condition.</p> <p>The central management of the repairs and renewals budget has been identified as an efficiency initiative.</p>
<b>Property Review</b>	The Council will undertake annual reviews of its property assets to ensure that they are fit for purpose and cost effective in terms of delivering the Council's services.
<b>Enabling commercial investment</b>	The Council will use its property holdings to facilitate economic development in the district, and to contribute to the vitality and viability of town centres.
<b>Operational Efficiency</b>	The Council is working to reduce running costs in the main Council Offices



### b) Approach to Each Property Category

The current position and proposals relating to the Council's various assets for 2011/12 is set out as follows: -

1. **a) Amenity Land:** The Council will seek to transfer amenity land to Parish Councils, Town Councils and community groups where appropriate. Retained amenity land will be maintained by the Council.

**b) Play Areas:** These are predominantly owned by the Parish/Town Councils

2. **Allotments:** These are managed by Housing Service with grounds maintenance services provided by Street Services.

3. **Area Offices:** The closure of the offices in Great Dunmow with the relocation of all office facilities to Saffron Walden has reduced expenditure on property and associated overheads but it is believed that further efficiencies can be made through greater utilisation of space within the Council Offices and exploring potential to release space to other organisations in order to generate rental income and offset some running costs.

An options appraisal was carried out last year for the Lodge House and the option to let it out commercially needs to be progressed.

The lease on the satellite office in Thaxted is due for renewal in April 2011. The Police, Citizens' Advice, Job Centre Plus and Parish Council all have a presence in these offices and provide an income and contribute to running costs.

4. **Car Parks:** It is proposed to retain the car parks that support the local economy.

Opportunities to improve car parking and town centre facilities will be explored.

5. **Cemeteries:** The Council has no statutory requirements to provide burial grounds and has transferred the cemetery at Saffron Walden to the Town Council.

6. **Depots:** The Council has three depots.

**a) The Great Dunmow Depot** is not fit for purpose and the following options to relocate the vehicle workshop are being considered:

- Co-locate with ECC at new vehicle base being built in Great Dunmow
- Relocate to a new site
- Move workshop to Shire Hill Depot
- Other options besides lease or purchase of land such as maintaining vehicles in shared workshops

Once a decision is made, office staff (3 people) would relocate to the new site.

**b) The Shire Hill Depot** is a more modern site and approximately half the waste fleet is run out of it with the other half out of Great Dunmow. There is potential to run all other Street Services vehicles out of Shire Hill.

**c) The Newport Depot** – This is a Housing depot and referred to in the HRA Business Plan.

### 7. **Community Facilities:**

There are 4 day centres that are run by independent management committees and options around transferring these to Parish / Town Councils are being looked at.

The Guild Hall in Thaxted is leased in on a peppercorn rent from Essex County Council for 50 years on a full repairing and insuring basis commencing 1976. There is an obligation under the lease to set up a management committee, which has been established through Thaxted Parish Council. The management committee receives income from lettings and carries out day to day maintenance, The arrangements need clarifying with a view to reducing the Council's financial liability.

A review of the Museum Service is underway as part of The Strategic Solutions Programme.

A new Community Information Centre is to be provided in Stansted within shared public sector accommodation.

### 8. **Leisure Facilities:**

The Council's leisure centres at Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and Stansted are managed and maintained under a PFI contract by Leisure Connection.

### 9. **Public Toilets:**

The public toilets in Great Dunmow have been transferred to the Town Council and the remaining 2 in Thaxted and Saffron Walden will continue to be managed, but opportunities to transfer them to the Town / Parish Council will be actively explored.

## Uttlesford District Council Asset Management Plan 2011/12

### 6. Status of Asset Management Plan 2010/11

	<b>Action / Task</b>	<b>Indicative Timescale</b>	<b>Foreseeable outcomes</b>	<b>Current Status</b>
1	To determine roles, responsibility and actions to ensure the Council can demonstrate best use of property	March 2010	Agreement of appropriate approach for UDC. Identification of level or resourcing required. Approaches made to external partners or providers for support in developing AM approach and / or delivery	BDC engaged to identify and map all non-housing assets and produce AMP for 2011/12
2	To review actions identified and demonstrate progress	June 2010	Agreement for actions during 2010/11	Review completed
3	To establish the Council's broad intentions for its approach to property	September 2010	An agreed approach to ownership and management of current and future property assets to underpin the Action Plan and other activity i.e., acquisition, disposal and maintenance	Addressed by new Asset Management Plan
4	Agree approach to collecting, holding and managing property information	June 2010	Extension of existing Housing database to incorporate information on General Fund property. Need to identify and agree resourcing impact	Non-housing data maintained by BDC
5	Refresh of PIs on condition, maintenance and energy	September 2010	Information should be available. Approach to external partners to review / assist	This work has been superseded by the need to produce an accurate Asset Register
6	Collect utilisation information	September 2010	Identify the true rate of use of property and any opportunities to make efficiencies	
7	Collect suitability information (PI)	September 2010	Approach to external partners to facilitate programme	
8	Collect sufficiency information	September 2010	To evidence the need / priority for new investment	
9	Produce report on refreshed PIs	September 2010	Refreshed AMP evidencing awareness of property performance	
10	Carry out review of non-housing property to determine potential value	March 2011	An informed view on whether there is significant realisable assets which can be released to support Council's financial priorities	This is being addressed by the Asset Management Plan
11	To assess future service property needs	March 2011	Articulation of future property needs and initial proposals for how this would be achieved	This is being addressed by the Asset Management Plan
12	Align CRC programme with other AMP issues	March 2011	Complementary CRC and maintenance plans which align with the broader property strategy	This work is being taken forward by Energy Consultants
13	Produce a revised asset register including key information and future implications for all significant property assets	March 2011	Articulation of all implications, liabilities and pressures upon property resources within a single document. Will require in-house co-ordination to ensure linkage across	Asset register completed by BDC

## Uttlesford District Council Asset Management Plan 2011/12

### 7. Action Plan 2011/12

Key Asset Management targets and significant milestones for 2011/2012 are:

	<b>Action Points</b>	<b>Milestones</b>	<b>Expected Benefits</b>	<b>By Who</b>
1.	Secure capacity for Implementing Asset Management Plan	Resource identified by April 2011	More effective and efficient asset management and service delivery	Assistant Chief Executive - Finance
2.	Determine way forward for Great Dunmow depot	Options agreed for Depot by December 2011	Improved service delivery	Director of Public Services (with support from asset management consultant and the Corporate Team)
3.	Carry out strategic review of the Council Offices site, in conjunction with major IT cabling renewal project	Report to Cabinet in Autumn 2011	Opportunities for co-location of public services are identified.	Director of Central Services (with support from asset management consultant and the Corporate Team)
4.	Secure specialist advice to support the Council in negotiations with Waitrose	Specialist advisor is retained by May 2011	The Council's position is protected and outcomes achieved that maximise benefits to the Council	Director of Public Services (with support from asset management consultant)
5.	To monitor Performance Indicators to inform future asset strategy	Collate performance indicators by March 2012	Identify efficiency savings	Assistant Chief Executive - Finance
6.	Implement outcomes arising from Day Centre Review	Complete actions by October 2011	Identify opportunities to increase income through more efficient utilisation of these facilities	Director of Public Services
7.	Set up system to identify lease renewals and rent reviews	System in place by October 2011	Realisation of additional income	Assistant Chief Executive - Finance
8.	Ensure linkage between budgets and condition surveys (planned maintenance programme)	Complete condition surveys by September 2011 to inform budget process	Reduce backlog maintenance and effective management of assets	Assistant Chief Executive - Finance
9.	Establish Corporate repairs and renewals budget for 2012/13 budget	Budgets to be centralised by April 2012	More efficient use of available resources	Assistant Chief Executive - Finance

## **UDC Owned / Leased Non-Housing Property**

<b>ASSET NO</b>	<b>PROPERTY TYPE</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>REASON ASSET HELD</b>	<b>UDC OWNED / LEASED</b>
ASSET/01	Amenity Land	Open space Barnard Close/Bullfields/Cherry Garden Lane, Newport	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/02	Amenity Land	Open Space Woodlands Park, Gt. Dunmow	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/03	Amenity Land	Open Space Nursery Rise, Gt. Dunmow	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/04	Amenity Land	Open Space Elizabeth Way, Saffron Walden	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/05	Amenity Land	Open Space Limefields, Lt. Walden Road, Saffron Walden	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/06	Amenity Land	Play Area Flich Green	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/07	Amenity Land	Open Space Willow Road, Great Dunmow	Open Space	UDC
ASSET/08	Amenity Land	Open Space The Downs, Stebbing	Open Space/ nature conservation	Leased in
ASSET/09	Area Office	Council Offices London Road, Saffron Walden	Delivery of Council Services	UDC
ASSET/10	Area Office	Lodge House London Road, Saffron Walden	Delivery of Council Services	UDC
ASSET/11	Area Office	Ground floor premises, 7 Town Street, Thaxted	Delivery of Council Services	Leased in
ASSET/12	Car Park	Lower Street, Stansted Mountfitchet	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/13	Car Park	Swan Meadow, Saffron Walden	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/14	Car Park	Fairycroft Road, Saffron Walden	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/15	Car Park	Debden Road, Saffron Walden	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/16	Car Park	Chequers Lane, Great Dunmow	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/17	Car Park	Angel Lane, Great Dunmow	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/18	Car Park	White Street, Great Dunmow	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/19	Car Park	Margaret Street, Great Dunmow	Car parking provision	UDC
ASSET/20	Car Park	The Common, Saffron Walden	Car parking	UDC

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ASSET NO	PROPERTY TYPE	DESCRIPTION	REASON ASSET HELD	UDC OWNED / LEASED
			provision	
ASSET/21	Cemetery	Cemetery land north of Church Street, Church End, Gt. Dunmow	Cemetery provision	UDC
ASSET/22	Community Facility	Day Centre Chequers Lane, Great Dunmow	Provision of community facilities	UDC
ASSET/23	Community Facility	Day Centre Vicarage Mead, Thaxted	Provision of community facilities	UDC
ASSET/24	Community Facility	Community Hall Priors Green, Little Canfield	Provision of community facilities	UDC
ASSET/25	Community Facility	Day Centre South Road, Takeley	Provision of community facilities	UDC
ASSET/26	Community Facility	Day Centre Hill Street, Saffron Walden	Provision of community facilities	UDC
ASSET/27	Community Facility	Community Hall Flitch Green	Provision of community facilities	UDC
ASSET/28	Community Facility	Museum, Saffron Walden	Provision of community facilities	Leased in
ASSET/29	Community Facility	40 Castle Street, Saffron Walden	Provision of community facilities	Leased in
ASSET/30	Community Facility	Guildhall, Thaxted	Provision of community facilities	Leased in
ASSET/31	Depot	Rear of High Street, Great Dunmow	Delivery of council services	UDC
ASSET/32	Depot	Shire Hill, Saffron Walden	Delivery of council services	UDC
ASSET/33	Leisure Facility	Lord Butler Leisure Centre, Saffron Walden	Leisure provision in the district	UDC
ASSET/34	Leisure Facility	Turpins Bowls Hall, Lord Butler Leisure Centre, Saffron Walden	Leisure provision in the district	UDC
ASSET/35	Leisure Facility	Skateboard park, Lord Butler Leisure Centre, Saffron Walden. Leased to Saffron Walden Town Council.	Leisure provision in the district	UDC
ASSET/36	Leisure Facility	Dunmow Sports Centre, Great Dunmow	Leisure provision	UDC

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ASSET NO	PROPERTY TYPE	DESCRIPTION	REASON ASSET HELD	UDC OWNED / LEASED
			in the district	
ASSET/37	Leisure Facility	Stansted Sports Centre, Stansted	Leisure provision in the district	UDC
ASSET/38	Miscellaneous	Claypits Plantation, Debden Road, Saffron Walden	Nature conservation	Leased in
ASSET/39	Public Toilets	Hill Street, Saffron Walden	Public Toilets	UDC
ASSET/40	Public Toilets	Margaret Street car park, Thaxted	Public Toilets	UDC

Note: The council manages and has some maintenance responsibilities for the Rose and Crown car park, Saffron Walden although it does not own or lease the facility.