

Committee: Resources
Date: 28 July 2005
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: Corporate Plan Action Plan Review – 1st Quarter 2005/06
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Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of the progress that has been made to date to implement the Action Plan within the Corporate Plan 2005 – 2008. Members are asked to comment on the progress and agree amendments to the completion dates for projects 9a, 21a, 21c and 30c.

Background

- 2 The Council's Quality of Life Corporate Plan 2005 – 2008 was confirmed at Council in February 2005. Since then, the Executive Programme Manager (EPM) (Quality of Life) has met with each Executive Manager to identify which officer should be responsible for each project within the Action Plan. In addition, they came to agreement about the relationship that the EPM would have with each project officer and the monitoring and review requirements.
- 3 There is a requirement to report on progress to implement the Corporate Action Plan on a quarterly basis and a monitoring and review process has been established by the EPM to enable the reports to be generated. In addition, the EPM is to meet with each project officer (21 in total) to monitor progress against a Project Activity Plan, which the project officer will draw up.
- 4 The EPM is currently working with the Performance Manager to consider the application of performance management software, which will assist with the monitoring of and reporting on the projects in the Action Plan. In addition, the EPM has formed a small project management methodology development team, consisting of officer representatives from across the Council, to consider how to introduce project management methodology.

Detailed Project Progress Report

- 5 Appendix 1 gives details of the status of each project at 30 June 2005. Projects Officers selected the relevant Status Statement from the following -

- A Project completed**
- B Project started and on target**
- C Project started but target completion date unlikely to be /not met**
- D Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006)**

For Statement B, the Project Officers were asked to provide brief details of the work that has been carried out to date to progress the project.

For statement D they were asked to provide details of the work that has been carried out to date but also give reasons why the completion date is unlikely to be met and brief details of the measures that are being taken to address this.

- 6 Where it was apparent that the project completion date would not be met, the EPM has discussed the project with the project officer and determined that it was appropriate to request of the Committee an extension to the completion date.
- 7 The table below highlights the projects in question (9a, 21a, 21c and 30c) and provides a reason for the slippage and suggests the date by which the EMP and relevant project officer considers the project will be completed by. This information is also show in Appendix 1 in the relevant Project Status column.

Project No.	Action – “We will...”	Target Completion Date & Suggested Completion Date	Project Status as at 30/06/05 and reason for slippage
9a.	Carry out a skills audit to understand the development needs of our Members and staff	30 September 2005 Propose target date amended to - 30 March 2006	Project started but target completion date will not be met A Competency Framework has been purchased from ECC and work is ongoing on identifying the key competencies for UDC. Once identified, this work will enable the creation of a skills audit. The audit will take place after the 30th September 2005 once the necessary work on competencies has taken place and before the next round of Appraisals from March 2006.
21a.	Through partnership working create, develop and provide support for Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in every locality	30 September 2005 Propose target date amended to - 31 December 2006	Project started but target completion date will not be met A District-wide Neighbourhood Watch Steering Group was formed in March 2004. It carried out a survey of all NhW volunteers which revealed that many volunteers wanted to stand down. The Group is carrying out a recruitment drive but it will not reach the target to increase coverage of NhW across district by 10% by 30 September 2005. (Current no. of locations covered by NhW Coordinators = 45, Current no. of

			NhW Coordinators = 111)
Project No.	Action – “We will...”	Target Completion Date & Suggested Completion Date	Project Status as at 30/06/05 and reason for slippage
21c.	Examine whether the PCSOs, our appropriate officers and other public agency staff (of all types) who regularly visit/work in communities can provide effective Community Warden Services in the district	30 September 2005 Propose target date amended to – 31 December 2006	Project started but target completion date will not be met Work to address this action will begin in the summer but the completion of date of 30 September 2005 will not be met, as it will involve consultation and involvement of a number of parties.
30c.	Develop an email mailing list of people and partner organisations across the District with whom we provide information	30 June 2005 Propose target date amended to – 31 December 2005	Project started but target completion date will not be met End of consultation period for JMT input is mid July. Database being built at present. Expected completion date 31 December 2005

Statistical Report

8 Table 1, below, sets out details of the status of projects within the Corporate Action Plan in statistical terms at 30 June 2005.

Number of projects in Corporate Plan = 58		
Status of 58 projects in Corporate Plan as at 30 June 2005	Number of projects	% In each Status Category
Projects completed	3	5
Projects started and on target	37	64
Projects unlikely to meet completion date	6	10
Projects that will not meet completion date	4	7
Project not yet started as completion date beyond March 2006	<u>8</u>	<u>14</u>
Totals	58	100

9 Table 2, below, sets out the details of the “Completion By” dates for the 58 projects in the Corporate Action Plan.

Details of “Completion By” dates for the 58 projects in Corporate Action Plan	Number of Projects	Projects Completed	Projects Started and on Target	Projects started but Completion Date unlikely to be met	Projects started but Completion Date will not be met	Project not yet started – Completion Date beyond March 2006
From March 2005/Annual	8	2	4	2		
By 30 June 2005	3	1	1		1	
By 30 September 2005	8		5		3	
By 31 December 2005	8		6	2		
By 31 March 2006	14		12			2
By 16 May 2006	1		1			
By 30 June 2006	1		1			
By 30 September 2006	3		2			1
By 31 December 2006	2			1		1
By 31 March 2007	5		2			3
By 30 September 2007	1			1		
By 31 December 2007	1		1			
By 31 March 2008	2		1			1
Dependent of Government Guidelines	1		1			
Totals	58	3	37	6	4	8

Analysis/Comment

- 10 64% of the projects in the Corporate Action Plan have been started and are expected to meet their target completion date.
- 11 10% of the projects are predicted not to meet their target completion date. The Executive Programme Manager will work with the relevant project officers to consider remedial measures to ensure as many of these projects as possible meet their target.

Recommended that

- 1 Members comment on the status of the projects as at 30 June 2005 in the Quality of Life Corporate Plan Action Plan.
- 2 agree amendments to the completion dates for projects 9a, 21a, 21c and 30c.

Background Papers: Programme Office File

Corporate Plan - Action Plan

1st Quarter Status Report to Resources 28 July 2005

Our Corporate Action Plan

The following section sets out the key corporate actions that the Council is to undertake over the next three years (2005-2008). The actions are set out under the five headings of the Uttlesford Excellence model – Excellence, People, Customers, Community and Communication. In addition, each action is categorised against the relevant nine QofL aims of :

QofL Aims	Key
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Providing strong community leadership and openness ○ Protecting and enhancing the environment and character of the district whilst: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improving local transport ○ Encouraging appropriate economic development ○ Improving the supply of good affordable homes to meet the needs of the local community ○ Promoting tourism, culture and leisure opportunities ○ Improving access to value for money services ○ Improving community safety and the health of the population ○ Supporting life long learning and developing better opportunities for young people 	A B C D E F G H I

Reporting Status Statements

The table below sets out the Status Statements from which the Project Officers have had to select to report on the progress of the project(s) for which they are responsible -

Project Status Statements	Supplementary Details required
Project completed	
Project started and on target	Brief details of the work that has been carried out to date
Project started but target completion date unlikely to be /not met	Details of the work that has been carried out to date and reasons why the completion date is unlikely be met and brief details of the measures that are being taken to address this
Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006)	

THEME: EXCELLENCE (Aims 1-8)

LEAD MEMBER:
To be determined

LEAD OFFICER:
Chief Executive

- Delivering high quality services, which meet the needs of the recipients and the wider community and represent value for money

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Office	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
1. Improve how we review and plan our services so that they reflect community need and achieve continuous improvement	1a. Produce three year, linked service and financial plans which take account of the Council's priorities and previously agreed efficiency/ improvement targets	The Corporate Plan sets out our corporate priorities. We have a number of improvement plans to deliver.	Public & staff will be able to link actions in service plans to improved efficiency /achievement of Council priorities	31 March each year	Via service Planning and from existing budgets	Tracy Turner / Phil O'Dell	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Service Planning guidelines were agreed by EMT 4/7/05. Service Plans Pre-Assessments to be considered by Committees in September and will capture Gershon efficiency savings and development pressures.</p> <p>More detailed Service Plans will be developed following the prioritization process to ensure that they reflect achievable and affordable priorities.</p> <p>A combined 3 year Budget Book and Service Planning document will be produced in early 2006.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Office	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	1b. Conduct Best Value Reviews of a number of key services identified through the Council prioritisation process	The Reviews will identify how we can make improvements and efficiencies savings	We will have achieved 5% improvements and/or 2% efficiency savings in these service areas	31 March each year	From service and corporate budgets	Tracy Turner / Ted Fenne II	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>We are currently in the process of identifying the status of previous Best Value Reviews and associated action plans and reviewing the Best Value Review process to ensure that there is an appropriate corporate mix of strategic cross-cutting Best Value Reviews, smaller scale management reviews of services, as well as opportunities for policy and scrutiny reviews.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	1c. Consider the options and where appropriate, seek to negotiate Local Service Agreements with partners and/or Essex County Council and other local authorities e.g. town & parish councils, for the local commissioning and delivery of services	We have details of the quality of service, cost and customer satisfaction levels which will be used as a benchmark	As a result of LSA's we will be able to demonstrate improved quality, cost and customer satisfaction levels	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Tracy Turner	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>There is continued consideration of appropriate opportunities for partnership working, devolution of service, or joint agreements around service provision or procurement opportunities.</p> <p>UDC met its LPSA1 target on e-procurement by 1 April 2005, and initial work with Essex County Council on LPSA2 targets has now rolled into negotiations for a Local Area Agreement for Essex which will be concluded by April 2006.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
2. Lead the development of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) to enable it to become a genuine forum in which public and community agencies are able to agree on a Community Strategy for Uttlesford and make realistic decisions on priorities on behalf of the community	Lead and assist the LSP to review the Community Plan, in conjunction with other partners and ensure that there is appropriate input from the community	We have a Community Plan that needs to be reviewed and updated with partners so that the LSP can be more effective	We will have met all of our targets/commitment and help implement the Community Plan	31 March each year	To be determined by the LSP	Tracy Turner	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>The Uttlesford Futures Partnership has reviewed and amended its governance arrangements, and the relaunched UF Board met in July 2005. The Community Plan will be refreshed during the remainder of 2005, encompassing visioning work at the Uttlesford Futures Assembly scheduled for September 2005. A performance management framework is also in development for the LSP.</p> <p>By 31 March 2005, in accordance with emerging guidance, it is expected that Uttlesford Futures will have a refreshed Sustainable Community Strategy with a rigorous performance management framework.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
3. Promote and defend the long-term interests of the community and district of Uttlesford by being engaged and active in sub-regional and regional partnerships	Develop a Strategic Development Advisory Group to enable effective policy making and engage with external partners including Stansted M11 Area local authorities Partnership, Stansted Area Housing Partnership, the West Essex Economic Partnership, EEDA, EERA and other current partnership arrangements	We have no mechanism to ensure that decisions and policies made on major, strategic issues are based on a long-term strategy	We will have succeeded in persuading the sub-region to adopt, support or compliment our policies	31 March 2005	To be identified by the SDAG	John Mitche II/ Roger Harb.	Project completed SDAG has been established. Other projects will stream from the work carried out by SDAG

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
4. Ensure that the buildings we manage meet the obligations of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA)	Programme works to Council buildings to meet the obligations of the DDA	We know how many and what needs to be done to our buildings to meet our obligations under the DDA	All of our buildings will have met the our statutory obligations under the DDA Standards as the legislation evolves	Annual review of each building	Planned programme of works from existing resources	Ernie Spencer	<p>Project started but target completion date unlikely to be met</p> <p>There are currently 17 buildings used by the Authority. 11 of these buildings (65%) are accessible. The work to the remaining 6 buildings is being dealt as follows –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Saffron Walden Museum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – ○ Toilets - to be addressed in Dec. 05. ○ School Room - programmed for 06/07 • Day Centres – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Saffron Walden – a new ramp to be provided this year ○ Thaxted - a major refurbishment of the Thaxted Day Centre is planned but resources and dates are still to be identified for this. • Saffron Walden TIC and Thaxted Guildhall are both listed buildings and cannot be adapted (At the TIC an attendance bell is available for those

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
5. Meet the Equality Standard for Local Government (Level2) by the target date of December 2006	Establish a Working Group of staff and Members to carry out an audit and develop an action plan to meet the Equality Standard	We need to carry out an audit and develop an action plan to understand what we need to do to meet the Equality Standard	We will have successfully implemented an action plan to enable us to meet the Equality Standard by the deadline	31 March 2006	Establish a staff/ Member Working Group	Carole Hughes	<p>Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006)</p> <p>The working group will receive equalities training late September /early October and then develop an action plan to enable the organisation to reach Level 2 by December 2006</p>
6. Raise the profile of the Council by achieving Beacon Status and/or LGC Awards and/or other similar national quality awards	Make at least two submissions for at least one of the awards	We want to make a number of submissions to a National Award Scheme	We will have ensured that two submissions are made in the next three years	31 March 2008	Establish a staff/Member team to manage the submission process	Ted Fennell	<p>Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006)</p> <p>Phase 1 will be to carry out a review to establish the current status of 'quality' certification throughout UDC e.g. ISO 9001, IIP, Charter Mark</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
7. Make quality and speedy decisions effectively through our Democratic structure	Review the constitutional arrangement of the Council and develop an Action. Plan to implement new arrangements. Identify baseline targets.	We have been identifying options to improve the current arrangements	An action plan will have been approved by the Annual Council meeting to enable the new arrangements to proceed thereafter	17 May 2006 at Annual Council Meeting	From existing resources	Michael Perry	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>There have been a number of meetings of the Constitution Task Group and workshops with Members. A draft Constitution is in an embryonic stage and awaiting a final decision from Members as the their preference for a structure for the Council.</p>
8. Encourage the promotion and delivery of lifelong learning opportunities for the people of Uttlesford	8a. Work with partners through the Uttlesford Futures to support the work of the Uttlesford Life Long Learning Partnership	We are represented on the Uttlesford Life Long Learning Partnership	We will have supported the development and implementation of two initiatives	30 March 2008	Additional resources required of £2k p.a.	Carole Hughes	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Exec Manager HR has meet with representatives of the ULLP to discuss opportunities such as 8b below and other possible initiatives. A further meeting will be held with the chair of the ULLP.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	8b. Through the Uttlesford Life Long Learning Partnership we will facilitate a meeting with local businesses in the district to discuss how we can develop opportunities for our officers and employees in the district to share experiences and knowledge e.g. through joint training, job shadowing and joint commissioning	We can use appraisals/Individual Development Plans to identify which staff have benefited from the opportunity	100% of staff who participate benefit from the experience	30 September 2006	From existing resources and LSP/LSC funding	Carole Hughes	<p>Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006)</p> <p>Intend to discuss the possibilities of linking 8a and 8b together and other possible opportunities when Executive Manager HR next meets with the chair of the ULLP.</p>

THEME: PEOPLE (Aims 9-11)	
LEAD MEMBER: To be determined	LEAD OFFICER: Executive Manager (HR)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensuring that we enable the people in the organization to deliver excellence through appropriate rewards, development and empowerment 	

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
9. Better equip our members and staff to carry out their respective roles	9a. Carry out a skills audit to understand the development needs of our Members and staff	We do not have a complete picture about development needs for members and staff	We will have information on the development needs of ALL Members and staff	30 September 2005 Propose target date amended to- 30 March 2006	£10k for consultant to develop process and interpret the outcomes	Mick Purkiss/ Carole Hughes	Project started but target completion date will not be met A Competency Framework has been purchased from ECC and work is ongoing on identifying the key competencies for UDC. Once identified, this work will enable the creation of a skills audit. The audit will take place after the 30th September 2005 once the necessary work on competencies has taken place and before the next round of Appraisals from March 2006.

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	9b. Develop Development Plans for Members and staff, including Individual Development Plans, which will prepare them for current and potential challenges and expectations	The appraisal process is not fully adopted and therefore it is not possible to identify training needs	We will have delivered 100% of all Individual Development Plan targets. We will have developed the appraisal process into a Personal Development review process	31 March 2006	From existing resources (£20k included in the QofL Plan)	Mick Purkis/Carole Hughes	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Once the Competency Framework is introduced it will result in changes to the format of the format and style of Appraisals. The IDeA work with Members will result in IDP.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
10. Promote awareness and personal choices about health to all of our Members and staff	Work with the UPCT and Occupational Health providers, hold an annual Health Awareness Day and support any Health Promotion initiatives e.g. Stress Management, Stop Smoking	Our sickness average for 2003/04 is 8.57 against a target of 7.00	Using our new HR system we will be able to highlight ill-health issues and target annual health promotion initiatives	31 March 2006	From existing and partnership resources	Jo Ware	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Data is still being entered onto our new CPMIS. When this is completed a statistical analysis will be undertaken to assess areas to be targeted for health promotion initiatives.</p> <p>We will also work with the Health Promotion Officer when appointed.</p>
11. Develop a flexible recruitment, promotion and retention policy under pinned by an Equal Opportunities Approach to encourage career development and opportunities and ensure flexible working practice are the norm	Review and revise the pay and reward, recruitment and promotion policies and procedures to promote greater flexibility for employees	Feedback from staff is that policies and procedures are too restrictive	We will have policies that are easy to access and understand and which support people in their work	31 March 2007	Review by Member & officer Working Group led by Executive Manager (HR)	Carole Hughes	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Please see 9a above. The work underway on the Competency Framework will lead onto this project.</p>

THEME: CUSTOMERS (Aims 12-15)	
LEAD MEMBER:	LEAD OFFICER: Executive Manager (CS)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exceeding the expectations of our customers in our ability to tackle the issues that matter to them effectively, responsibly and speedily 	

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
12. Work with ECC and transport providers to give residents a greater range of timely and effective transportation services and encourage more use of services	12a. Work with partners in the County to introduce Smartcard technology that would be accepted by all public transport providers (including those operating across boundaries)	We know that there are no existing public transport providers accepting Smartcards for travel on their vehicles	100% coverage of all public transport	31 March 2007	Shared partnership funding with regional, county and other key players. £ still to be quantified.	Sarah McLagan	Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006).

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA					
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...	Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	12b. Work with public transport providers, developers, partners and major retailers through the Transport Forum to identify the key public transport routes through the district and actively encourage the provision of buses or other modes of transport, such as Mini-Hoppers, Community Transport and village mini-buses	We know the level of availability of public transport on key routes	We will have worked with partners to increase provision from this baseline	30 September 2007	Shared Partnership funding. £ still to be quantified.	Jeremy Pine	<p>Project started but target completion date unlikely to be met.</p> <p>UDC, via the Transport Forum, has participated in ECC's West Essex Area Review of Public Transport and officers have also been part of the Area Strategy Working Groups that have drawn up ECC's Local Transport Plan (LTP2) 2006-11.</p> <p>The level of funding that will result from LTP2 is still uncertain and this won't be known until the end of 2005 and the outcome may mean that schemes programmed for the County cannot proceed.</p> <p>However, it is the intention of ECC to work on a pilot project within UDC for youth transport if the funding is available.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	12c. In conjunction with ECC, SWTC and Wendens Ambo PC, carry out a study to ascertain how to develop a safe cycle way from Saffron Walden to Audley End Station	We have an Uttlesford Cycle Network Plan. The top priority in the plan is the development of a cycle way from Saffron Walden to Audley End Station.	We will have completed the study and have an action plan to move the project forward	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Jeremy Pine	<p>Project started and on target.</p> <p>A study, by Mouchel Parkman, of the route between Saffron Walden and Audley End Station has been completed and received. The next stage will be to analyse the options in the report, in conjunction with the stakeholders, and draw up a report and action plan for committee.</p>
13. Promote participation in artistic and cultural activities in the district	13a. Work with partners to consider the need for an Arts Centre in the district	Partners need to employ consultants to carry out a Feasibility Study	A Feasibility Study will have been carried out by the target date and it provides information to enable decisions to be made about arts provision.	30 September 2005	Shared Partnership Funding. £ still to be quantified	Sarah McLagan /Gaynor Bradley	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>A Consultant will be appointed in July to carry out the work to produce a Feasibility Study as part of the work to produce a Leisure & Cultural Strategy</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	13b. Work with partners to consider and develop opportunities for the provision of appropriate accommodation for aspiring artists, exhibitions etc	We need to employ consultants to carry out a Feasibility Study	A Feasibility Study will have been carried out by the target date and it provides information to enable decisions to be made about arts provision.	30 September 2005	Shared Partnership resources	Sarah McLagan / Gaynor Bradley	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>A Consultant will be appointed in July to carry out the work to produce a Feasibility Study as part of the work to produce a Leisure & Cultural Strategy</p>
	13c. Work with Saffron Walden County High School to establish a local community cinema facility through an independent trust.	We have a draft Business Plan and the trust has been discussed in principle but these need to be developed and confirmed to ensure an effective service is provided	The cinema is open and providing the service required to the local community	31 December 2005	Contribution (£80k) towards building from Capital Programme (included in QofL Plan). £5k ongoing (tapering) revenue contribution	Sarah McLagan	<p>Project started but target completion date unlikely to be met</p> <p>The Cinema is scheduled to open January 2006.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	13d. Consider options to provide improved access to cinema across the rest of Uttlesford	It has been agreed with SWCHS that the cinema trust will be required to look at options as a funding condition	Options will have been considered by relevant parties and an action plan will have been developed and agreed for delivering in 2007/08	31 December 2006	£ to be identified	Sarah McLagan	Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006)

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
14. Review how our citizens currently access the Council's services and the opportunities available for providing more choice, improved service and greater integration with other agencies	14a. Implement the outcomes of the Best Value Review of Access to Services	We have a BV action plan that needs to be implemented	The actions in the project plan will have been implemented	31 March 2006	£300k allocated in the 2005/06 revenue budget	Mike Brean	Project started and on target A Project Plan has been agreed by Resources
	14b. Implement a Customer Response Management System and Document Imaging Processes to support frontline service delivery	We have an action plan that needs to be implemented	The actions in the project plan will have been implemented	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Mike Brean	Project started and on target A Project Plan has been agreed by Resources
15. Make full use of the potential for electronic service delivery to improve the responsiveness and quality of services	Meet the following national targets – "All services to be available electronically by 31 st December 2005". All national priority outcomes achieve by the 31 st December 2005"	We have to comply to BVPI 157	100% of services will have met required targets	31 December 2005	£150k funding secured from the ODPM	Adrian Webb	Project started and on target 577 of the 640 interactions (90.1%) have been completed

THEME: COMMUNITY (Aims 16-29)	
LEAD MEMBER:	LEAD OFFICER: Executive Manager (Development)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leading and representing the community at all levels, maximizing our ability as a Council to secure the best available future for Uttlesford 	

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
16. Establish and articulate a clear Vision for the future of Uttlesford District	Define how the Council is to deliver the Vision, taking into account our own objectives, external pressures etc.	The Citizens panel can provide us with its level of understanding about our existing Vision	We will have a clear Vision that is endorsed by the Citizens Panel and other community representatives	31 December 2005	From existing resources	John Mitche II	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>SDAG has debated a "Vision for the future of the Council" and the CEx. will be giving a presentation to Council on 19th July.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
17. Improve our liaison and contact with Hard-to-Reach groups to understand their needs	Work with partners facing similar issues to develop a strategy and action plan to identify and consult with Hard-to-Reach groups	We do not have a means of identifying and consulting with Hard-to-Reach groups in the district	Hard-to-Reach groups advise us that they are informed and engaged	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Tracy Turner	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Ongoing engagement taking place through community development and leisure sections. A Multi-cultural Festival is planned for September 2005 and there will be engagement via the refreshing the UF Community Plan. A Communication and Consultation Strategy is being developed during 2005/06</p>
18. Help to stimulate a thriving, diverse and sustainable local economy	18a. Work with the local businesses and the wider community to develop a 10 year economic development strategy that supports the district's vision for 2021	We are compiling information describing the level of investment and diversity of jobs in the district	We will have increased the diversity of employment opportunities in the district and maintain the level of unemployment at no more than 1%	31 March 2007	EDO to develop strategy	Roger Harb.	<p>Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006).</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	18b. Develop a Tourism Strategy to complement and enhance the economic development of the district	We have information about the number of visitors to the district and to each tourist attraction	We will have increased visitors to the district and attractions from base numbers year on year	31 March 2007	EDO to develop strategy	John Mitchell	Project not yet started (completion date beyond march 2006)
19. Have appropriate and effective emergency plans in place which meet the requirements of the new Civil Contingencies Bill	Plan for both war and peacetime civil emergencies and terrorism, including the production of Business Continuity Plans	We do not have the number and range of plans that we are required to have to meet statutory obligations and do not have the resources to produce them	100% plans in place by the statutory deadlines	Govt. to confirm	£15k consultancy costs to support the production of Business Continuity Plans	Emergency Planning Officer	Project started and on target ECC are recruiting additional Emergency Planning Officers jointly with district councils to undertake this work.
20. Provide residents and Town and Parish Councils with adequate and appropriate advice and information to help them deal	20a. Create a data base of properties subject to flood risk, with contact details	We provide a leaflet and support to vulnerable residents	A Data base will be in place	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Emergency Planning Officer	Project not yet started (completion date beyond March 2006). Awaiting recruitment of new Emergency Planning Officer following the resignation of the previous post holder.

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
with the impact of flooding and other impacts of global warming and climate change	20b. Facilitate workshops and training for Parish and Town Councils to enable them to make adequate arrangements for their residents in the event of a flood	We know which Parish and Town Councils should attend as they have residents who might be affected by flooding	P&TCs affected by flooding will attend at workshops and training	31 March 2005 for first workshop /training	From existing resources	Emergency Planning Officer	<p>Project started but target completion date unlikely to be met.</p> <p>The target of the first workshop by 31st March was achieved but the projects is ongoing.</p> <p>Awaiting recruitment of new Emergency Planning Officer following the resignation of the previous post holder.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	20c. Work with the Environment Agency and other relevant parties to identify and implement measures to reduce flooding in priority areas	We know which areas are a priority for remedial measures	Priority areas will have had remedial measures carried out	31 March 2006	From existing Capital resources (£50k allocated via QofL Plan 2005/6 and 2006/7).	Phil Hunt	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Correspondence has been sent to Town & Parish Councils and affected residents offering pump-priming resources to match fund own allocation for remedial works.</p> <p>Work has been carried out in Takeley in cooperation with ECC.</p> <p>UDC Engineer to make further contact with relevant Town/ Parish Councils/residents in identified priority areas to reinforce the offer of pump-priming resources.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
21. Work with the Police and the community to make communities safer, reduce crime and the fear of crime	21a. Through partnership working create, develop and provide support for Neighbourhood Watch Schemes in every locality	We have details of the number of areas where there is an active Neighbourhood Watch Scheme	Number of areas with an active Neighbourhood Watch Scheme will have increased by 10%	30 Sept. 2005 Propose target date amended to – 31 December 2006	From existing resources (£2k allocated via QofL Plan ongoing)	Rachel Hutchinson.	Project started but target completion date will not be met A District-wide Neighbourhood Watch Steering Group was formed in March 2004. It carried out a survey of all NhW volunteers which revealed that many volunteers wanted to stand down. The Group is carrying out a recruitment drive but it will not reach the target to increase coverage of NhW across district by 10% by 30 September 2005. (Current no. of locations covered by NhW Coordinators = 45, Current no. of NhW Coordinators = 111)

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	21b. Review of the effectiveness of the Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs)	We have some performance information from Essex Police which indicates how effective the PCSOs are against an original criteria	We will have a more meaningful set of indicators which will help measure the effectiveness of the PCSOs	30 June 2005	From existing resources	Rachel Hutchin.	Project completed The Community Safety Officer has liaised with the Police Inspector who has responsibility for all PCSO's in the Division. The CSO is to receive regular PI information relating to PCSO's from end of 1 st Q 2005. A report will be made to Resources in the Autumn.
	21c. Examine whether the PCSOs, our appropriate officers and other public agency staff (of all types) who regularly visit/work in communities can provide effective Community Warden Services in the district	We have information about the visits/work of our officers. We need to consider what our partners have	The review results in pilot schemes which use our officers and which indicate, through consultation, that they are effective/useful to communities	30 September 2005 Propose target date amended to – 31 December 2006	From existing resources	Rachel Hutchin.	Project started but target completion date will not be met Work to address this action will begin in the summer but the completion of date of 30 September 2005 will not be met as it will involve consultation and involvement of a number of parties.

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	21d. Work with the Police and other partners to consider how to make the Police more accessible, visible and design out crime in new developments	We have a good working relation with the Police and partners	The Citizens Panel confirm that visibility has improved	31 December 2005	From existing resources	Rachel Hutchinson.	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Section 17 training for UDC officers has been programmed for Autumn 2005.</p> <p>The NhW newsletter includes email, direct dial and mobile numbers of all Community Beat officers and PCSOs.</p> <p>Rural PCSOs have been provided with transport (Ford Ka) by the Police and CSAT to enable better access to rural areas</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
22. Encourage local communities to take more of a role in their development and enhancement	22a. Facilitate meeting with clusters of Town and Parish Councils and relevant local representative groups who are invited on the basis of the local issues and opportunities that need addressing	We can prioritise which Towns, Parish Councils and relevant representative groups should be invited to initial meetings based on issues and opportunities	More than 50% of the invited Towns, Parish Councils and relevant groups will have been present at the meetings	31 December 2005	From existing resources	John Mitche II /Tracy Turner	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Parish Liaison meetings have been set up to run quarterly and are well attended. An enhanced programme of parish forums is considered e.g. a six monthly general forum, coordinated by Strategy and Performance, supplemented by intermediate forums dedicated to planning issues.</p> <p>The Environment Committee has approved the Statement of Community Involvement regarding planning matters.</p>
	22b. Facilitate workshops and attend Town & Parish Council meetings to encourage them to achieve the Quality Council Award and Parish Charter	We have details of Town and Parish Councils that have shown interest in the Award/Charter	Upto 25% of the Town and Parish Councils in the district will have attended workshops	30 June 2005	From existing resources	John Mitche II	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>The last parish liaison meeting discussed the issue of quality parish status, and will be discussed at further liaison meetings</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	22c. Facilitate opportunities through workshops and meetings to encourage the development of new and sustain existing "Village Shops"	We are aware of the current number of Village Shops in the district	We will have provided advice to those villages that want to pursue development of Village Shop /cooperative	31 March 2005	From existing resources	Alex Stewart	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Advice and guidance has been provided to various communities in the district in conjunction with RCCE. e.g. Wimbish is currently looking to develop a "community facility" which includes a village shop.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
23. Promote use and encourage development of appropriate outdoor recreation facilities, activities and space which help to promote good health and healthy lifestyles	23a. Work with ECC developers and Parish and Town Councils to consider opportunities to improve and promote recreation activities and facilities including footpaths, play areas etc	We have information about the number and condition of existing facilities	We will have improved the existing facilities from the existing level of provision	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Sue Hayden	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>A Questionnaire has been sent to all Parish Councils regarding their level of outdoor recreation facility provision</p>
	23b. Work with appropriate partners to maintain the current geographical area of ancient woodlands in the District and ensure it is not lost to development etc	We have details of the existing woodlands in the district	We will have retained and enhanced the area and quality of woodland in the district	31 December 2007	From existing resources	John Mitchell	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Officers are involved in seeking to enforce against unauthorized paintballing in Quendon Woods and eradicating illegal works to Plantation Woods near Saffron Walden.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	23c. Work with relevant partners to establish the potential to link green lanes with existing long distance footpaths, way marked footpaths, bridleways and quiet country roads to make short and long circular walks. Promote these to residents and tourists	We can use the information that we have on existing footpaths etc. to identify potential links	We will have carried out a pilot to provide information to influence decisions about future links/routes	30 June 2006	From existing resources (£5k ongoing allocated in Revenue Budget and £20k in Capital programme via QofL Plan.	Sue Hayden	Project started and on target Turpin's Trail leaflet has been published and promoted via various outlets e.g. TIC & CICs Healthy Walk initiatives have taken place.
	23d. Carry out a study to establish whether there is potential for the provision of a country park and/or study/activity centre in the district which would provide a visitor attraction and educational facility	Consultants would have to be employed to assess the potential for this project	A Feasibility Study will have been completed by the deadline	30 December 2005	Consultancy costs £ still to be quantified (some work can be carried out as part of the development of the Leisure & Cultural Strategy)	Roger Harb. (initially) /Sarah McLagan (watch brief)	Project started and on target Feasibility being explored through submission of an Expression of Interest bid to the ODPM Growth Area Fund Round 2, supported by Essex Wildlife Trust. Bid submitted early June - outcome awaited from ODPM

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
24. Work more effectively with Essex County Council Youth Service to improve services available for young people in Uttlesford	With Essex County Council and the Uttlesford Youth Forum, complete the Best Value Review of Young People's services in the district and develop, where appropriate, formal partnership arrangements for the improvement of those services	We have information about the level of service that we provide and access to young people to discuss their needs, concerns and views	We will have implemented the actions emerging from the BV Improvement Plan by the deadlines	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Gaynor Bradley	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Progress of Review reported to Community & Leisure Committee in June 2005.</p>
25. Work effectively with farmers, rural businesses, nature conservationist, wildlife groups to protect, enhance and encourage public enjoyment of the countryside	25a. Develop and promote the Uttlesford Countryside Forum website to relevant and appropriate parties	We have 15 members of the Countryside Forum website	We will have increased the number of members of the website by 10 people	30 December 2005	From existing resources	Sarah Nicholas	<p>Project started but target completion date unlikely to be met</p> <p>Current members are not using the forum and therefore unlikely to meet target. Officers to consider best use of available resources to achieve aim.</p> <p>There are other initiatives that are being pursued to establish contact with business and address the rural agenda within the organization.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	25b. Through the Forum, consider opportunities for the Council to support the development of local Farmers Markets, new business ventures etc.	We have planning policies which encourage diversification in rural areas	We will have a sufficiently thriving rural economy to retain existing social infra structure e.g. village shops	31 December 2006	From existing resources	Sarah Nicholas	<p>Project Started but target completion date unlikely to be met</p> <p>Current members are not using the forum and therefore unlikely to meet target. Officers to consider best use of available resources to achieve aim.</p>
26. Proactively challenge and manage potential development in the district such as Stansted Airport and large scale housing development and the provision of affordable housing, whilst retaining and enhancing the district's social capital	Through the Strategic Development Advisory Group consider how the Council can strengthen and enhance its position when dealing with major strategic issues and development	We have established acceptable levels of development through determination of the Local Plan	The levels of development in the district will have met the targets set out in the Local Plan	31 March 2005	From existing resources	John Mitchell	<p>Project completed</p> <p>Local Plan adopted and all 4 major housing sites now have planning permission</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
27. Support Uttlesford PCT to improve and increase the local services	27a. With Uttlesford PCT conduct a fundamental appraisal of the Council's direct and indirect contribution to improving public health in Uttlesford	We have information about the direct contribution that we make to improving public health	We will be able to provide specific information about our contribution and make decisions about changes to the level of contribution	30 September 2005	From existing resources	Alex Stewart	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Funding audit being undertaken. Results due by end August 2005. Health & Housing Committee approval to appoint joint Director of Public Health June 2005. There is currently a significant amount of public health work taking place within S&P and Env. & Cultural Service Units.</p>
	27b. Work with Uttlesford PCT to consider a strategy and action plan for lobbying for increased local clinical services	We work closely with Uttlesford PCT to support and develop existing services	We will have met the targets set out in the action plan	31 March 2006	From existing resources	Alex Stewart	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Lobbying has been carried out via Scrutiny 1 with regard to issue around screening services and Cancer preventative issues. A joint meeting between PCT Board and EMT has been arranged for September 2005 to progress this work.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
28. Support the voluntary sector to work across communities and in turn, help to compliment Council services	With the key Voluntary sector representatives assess where there are gaps in service provision in the communities and formulate an action plan to address them	We need to carry out an audit of existing services to ascertain the current levels of provision and need/gaps	We will have met the targets set out in the action plan	30 September 2005	From existing resources	Alex Stewart	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>All Service Level Agreements have been reviewed</p> <p>Funding audit being undertaken. Results due by end August 2005.</p>
29. Encourage the main retail centres/significant communities in the district to consider the issues and opportunities that they face and work with them to address these	29a. Where appropriate, support the work of the Saffron Walden Initiative to implement its Healthcheck action plan	We can identify the actions that we are required to implement and support from the action plan	We will have met the targets set out in the action plan	30 September 2006	From existing resources	Sarah McLagan	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>The Council has employed a Saffron Walden Project Officer to implement the Healthcheck action plan. The Council is represented on the Saffron Walden Partnership Board which oversees the work of the Project Officer.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	29b. Work with Rural Community Council for Essex to encourage communities in the district to carry out Health checks/village appraisals//parish plans	A number of Health checks/village appraisals/parish plans have been carried out to date	The number of health checks/village appraisals/parish plans carried out will have increased	30 September 2006	From existing resources	John Mitchell /Alex Stewart	Project started and on target Funds have been set aside from the Planning Delivery Grant to help with Parish Plans and Village Design Statements
	29c. Encourage and support/promote potential and existing business forums	We can ask existing Business Forums in the district what level of support they require	The Business Forums confirm the effectiveness of Council's support and promotion	31 March 2007	From Economic Development resources	Roger Harb.	Project started and on target Working with Saffron Walden Initiative and Business Link to support new business networking arrangement in Sffron Walden and surrounding area. Working with Great Dunmow Chamber of Trade and Commerce by supporting Future of Great Dunmow Working Group. Supporting Stansted Airport Business Forum through involvement in Tourism Working Group.

THEME: COMMUNICATION (Aims 30-31)	
LEAD MEMBER:	LEAD OFFICER: Executive Manager (CG)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increasing our ability as an organisation to deliver all of the above by effective two way communication between UDC as a whole, members, managers, staff, partners, stakeholders and government at all levels 	

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
30. Communicate and consult effectively with visitors, residents and businesses in the district about services/service development, needs and concerns	30a. Develop a new Communications and Consultation Strategy and an action plan to deliver that includes details on how we will market and promote our assets and heritage and how we will engage and consult effectively, including with hard to reach groups, on major issues, service delivery etc	Our existing strategy does not reflect the Council's ambition to promote itself and its assets or communicate effectively	We will have an action plan to deliver the strategy	31 March 2006	From existing resources (£20k committed via QofL Plan)	Tracy Turner	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Work has begun on strategies to address Communications and Consultation. Inspection reports arising from CPA and User Focus point to the need for additional resources to be allocated to the communications function, and a report will be made on this during 2005.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	30b. Consult on the effectiveness of our web site and those of participating Parish Councils and improve them accordingly.	We have details of the number of hits and feedback on the site	We will have increased the number of hits by 5% and can measure satisfaction levels	30 September 2005	From existing resources	Tracy Turner	<p>Project started and on target</p> <p>Informal feedback on the effectiveness of the website will be channelled into methods of proactive feedback aimed at developing the site for maximum user focus and navigability.</p>

We aim to....	We will...	SUCCESS CRITERIA				Project Officer	Project Status (30.06.05)
		Where we are now...	Where we want to be...	By when...	Resources...		
	30c. Develop an email mailing list of people and partner organisations across the District with whom we provide information	We do not have an email mailing list	We will have increased the number of people introducing an email mailing list and increase this number year on year	30 June 2005 Propose target date amended to – 31 December 2005	From existing resources	Adrian Webb	Project started but target completion date will not met End of consultation period for JMT input is mid July. Database being built at present. Expected completion date 31 December 2005
31. Enable the general public, including Hard-to-Reach groups, to play a greater role in the development of key Council policies and plans including, Housing Strategy, Community Plan and development plan documents	Carry out a review of existing public involvement and develop an action plan to introduce wider public involvement to meet the required standard for development plan documents	We have details of existing public involvement in key Council decisions	We will have met the targets in the action plan to engage the public in decision making	31 December 2005	From existing resources	Roger Harb. /Tracy Turner	Project started and on target Review of existing public involvement carried out as part of preparing Statement of Community Involvement. SCI submitted to GO East end of June 2005.

Committee: RESOURCES
Date: 28th July 2005
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: BENEFIT FRAUD
Author: Michael Perry (01799) 510416

Summary

- 1 In April 2005, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate carried out an inspection of the Council's Benefit Fraud Section. Councils are normally selected if they are perceived to be under performing. However, Uttlesford was chosen for an inspection, as it was perceived to be a high performing Council. The Council does in fact impose almost three times as many sanctions as District Council Authorities within the top quartile.
- 2 The inspection lasted two weeks and was carried out by three inspectors. The work involved the inspectors interviewing a number of officers of the Council, examination of a sample of case files and an audit of tape-recorded interviews.
- 3 A report will be addressed to the Secretary of State and will be published in due course. Until publication, the report is subject to an embargo. The inspection was generally constructive. A number of recommendations were made, many of which have been implemented. One recommendation was that quarterly reports should be made to this Committee on the performance of the Benefit Fraud Team.

Background

- 4 The Benefit Fraud Team has three Best Value Performance Indicators and an internal target for sanction subsidy recovered. The Best Value Performance Indicators relate to the number of investigators employed per thousand benefit claimants, the number of investigations per thousand benefit claimants and the number of sanctions (administrative penalties, cautions or prosecutions) per thousand claimants. In addition, as part of the budget setting process the Team is targeted with achieving a sanctions subsidy of £130,000 per annum.
- 5 The Team consists of two investigators. One of these has only recently been recruited and is undergoing training.
- 6 Following restructuring of the department, the current target for investigators per thousand claimants is .67. This is achieved with two investigators but may be reviewed before the end of the year with a view to modifying the target to one investigator per thousand claimants.

- 7 The target for investigations per thousand claimants is 60 per year. To achieve this, 180 investigations would need to be undertaken in a 12-month period. As at the 31st March 2005, there were 29 active cases. Since 31st March 2005 an additional 59 cases have been opened. With the current level of referrals it is anticipated that this target will be met.
- 8 With regard to the number of sanctions, the target is 15 sanctions per thousand claimants. To achieve this, the Fraud Team would need to administer 45 sanctions in a 12-month period. Since 31st March 2005, the Team has imposed 3 administrative penalties, 9 cautions and has issued 14 summonses. In addition, there are currently 9 cases awaiting preparation for prosecution. It is considered that this target will be achieved.
- 9 When a sanction is imposed, the Council receives a subsidy from the Department of Work and Pensions of £1,200 for each administrative penalty, caution or summons issued. In the event of a prosecution, if a conviction follows a further subsidy of £2,000 is payable. Assuming the Team meets its target for the number of sanctions referred to above, it is considered that the subsidy target of £130,000 per annum will be achieved.
- 10 The current level of referrals is higher than the fraud team can handle. Procedures will therefore be adopted to evaluate referrals and to target for investigation cases where sanctions are likely to apply for least effort. By adopting this approach it is inevitable that some fraudulent claims will not be investigated. Once the new member of staff has been fully trained an evaluation will be carried out of the workload. If it can be demonstrated that the recruitment of a third investigator (or administrative support for the existing investigators) can be met from increased subsidies a report will be submitted to the Committee requesting approval for an additional post.

RECOMMENDED that Members note the contents of this report.

Background Papers: None

Committee: Resources
Date: 28th July 2005
Agenda Item No: 7
Title: Review of Property Assets
Author: Philip O'Dell 01799-510670

Summary

- 1 This report proposes the creation of a Member Task Group to review the Council's property assets and to make appropriate recommendations.

Background

- 2 The Council's property assets are valued at approximately £278m as at 31st March 2005 in the Statement of Accounts appearing elsewhere on this agenda. The vast majority of this value is made up of the Council housing stock. Nevertheless, other assets with a value of £13m are held and require review regarding their current and potential use.
- 3 The Council has previously prepared annual Asset Management Plans to examine the non-housing property assets of the Council. The last one of these Plans was produced at the end of the financial year 2003/04. Following the awarding of 'Good' status to this plan by the Government Office for the East, there is no formal requirement for the Council to submit a plan during 2005.
- 4 There is however a need to review the Council's property assets at this time for the following reasons:
 - The need to consider the current or potential use of assets in service provision
 - The need to generate additional capital resources or revenue streams
 - The need to examine the future investment requirements of assets held

Scope, Process and Duration and Membership of Task Group

- 5 It is proposed that the Task Group consider the issues outlined in paragraph 4 above for all assets other than the Council housing stock. A Task Group involving Members is considered desirable due to the links that Members have with the community, and their local knowledge. This arrangement worked well regarding issues relating to the Council's Dunmow offices.
- 6 It is envisaged that a Member and officer group would meet 4/5 times over the next two months with a view to bringing a report back to this at the September meeting, when Capital Programme Guidelines and the Council's debt free status will also be considered.

- 7 It is considered that a Task Group consisting of three Members of the Resources Committee would be appropriate, with one Member chairing the Group. The officers proposed for the Group are the Architect and Property Advisor, the Executive Manager (Finance and Asset Strategy), and the Executive Manager (Housing Services) and the Programme Officer from Housing Services.

Recommended that the Member Task Group for the Review of Property Assets is set up in accordance with the approach contained in this report

Background Papers: Asset Management Plan 2003/04

Committee: Resources Committee
Date: 28th July 2005
Agenda Item No: 8
Title: Thaxted Road and Newport Depot Site Options for Museum Resource Centre
Author: Carolyn Wingfield (01799) 510333

Summary

- 1 The Museum Resource Centre Project Team until now has been pursuing the Council's Newport Depot as the only realistic and cost-effective site option for the proposed resource Centre. However a site off Thaxted Road also in Council ownership has recently become available and has been proposed as an alternative location.
- 2 The Thaxted Road site offers several advantages over the Newport Depot site, chiefly a more visible and public location, which may benefit both users and potential funders, greater proximity to the Museum and other public amenities and the opportunity to mark a main approach to Saffron Walden with a heritage amenity. However the Newport depot site remains a viable option. Members are asked to decide whether the Thaxted Road site can be allocated for the Resource Centre, subject to funding being raised, or whether the Project Team should continue with the Newport Depot site.

Background

3. The Resource Centre project is designed to rectify the chronic lack of appropriate facilities for housing and using the Museum's collections, to

enable the Museum Service to develop new audiences, keep pace with developments in the District and generally contribute more to the quality of life by getting better value from its collections. It envisages a purpose-built Resource Centre, footprint approx. 300 square metres (2-storey), subject to raising matching funding and obtaining Council's approval to apply for a Heritage Lottery Fund Grant in late 2005/early 2006.

4. Since the Resource Centre was identified as a priority project in the Museum's Strategic Plan 2001-04, numerous site options have been investigated by Museum staff, in conjunction with other Council staff and members. This has included, for instance, contacting commercial property agents, investigating industrial and agricultural buildings and following up numerous suggestions and offers. The results are summarised in Appendix 1, and Background Papers list the reports produced at various stages. Factors taken into account include the cost effectiveness of building or converting, accessibility for users and staff, and the need to meet HLF and Council criteria for a sustainable, long-term solution.
5. Following these investigations, the Resource Centre Project Team concluded in 2004 that the only viable and most cost-effective option was a purpose-built building on the Newport Depot site. Being Council owned, this site has no purchase costs or on-going lease costs attached; the same considerations apply to the Thaxted Road site.
6. In May 2005, the Council's Architect and Property Adviser advised Museum staff and the Project Team that a Council-owned site off Thaxted Road, next to the Essex County Council Civic Amenity Site, was potentially available. Until recently, issues of access, ownership and development of the surrounding area prevented this site from being considered for any purpose. However plans for the development of surrounding land adjacent to Thaxted Road, clarification of access to the site and confirmation with Essex County Council and the Land Registry of the boundaries, have made it possible for this site to be considered for use by the Council.
7. Comparison of the Thaxted Road and Newport Depot sites is made in the table below. The Resource Centre Project Team and Museum staff prefer the Thaxted Road site for the reasons given, and it is likely that the more public site at Thaxted Road will make a greater impression on potential funders.
8. Apart from advantages to the Museum Service, the Thaxted road site offers the Council the opportunity to have a 'flagship' building on a prominent site, promoting the District's identity and heritage. Environmental sustainability and 'green' building practices could also be considered as an important feature and a contribution to the Council's environmental agenda.

	Thaxted Road	Newport Depot
Size of Site	Good Space for building and parking within the site	Fair Space for building, limited parking outside Depot
Nature of site	Good	Fair

	Raised site on chalk, no risk of flooding	Building can be flood-proofed, surrounding area may flood
Access to Site	Good Development would allow good vehicular/coach access, and pedestrian path.	Fair Vehicular access via narrow lane and low bridge. Coach access not possible
Access to Uttlesford (taking collections and services out to District)	Good Access via main road to Thaxted and Dunmow	Good Access to Stansted and A120
Security	Fair – Good More exposed site, would require security fencing and lighting to make good	Good Site does not draw attention to itself, other Council staff during day and secure Depot compound
	Thaxted Road	Newport Depot
Location – for Users	Good Easy to locate, off main road	Fair Near main road but needs directions as not obvious
Location – for Staff	Good 1 mile from Museum – saving on staff time and travel	Fair 3.5 miles from Museum
Public profile for building	Good Visible from main road	Poor Hidden site – low profile
Capital Cost of Building	No significant difference between sites anticipated	
Revenue Costs	No significant difference between sites anticipated	
Removal Costs for Collections	Fair Additional Project Cost to transfer collections from Newport (low £ 000s)	Good Removal costs negligible – new building next door to old store
Ability to attract funding	Good Public profile of site an asset	Fair – uncertain Site does not offer such good publicity opportunities, although services delivered will be the same whichever site is used.

Recommendations

Members are asked to indicate which of the two sites they wish to allocate to the Resource Centre, subject to funding being raised and to Council approval to apply to the Heritage Lottery Fund at a future date. It is emphasised that the decision taken tonight will not commit the Council to the project, however a decision on which site to proceed with is essential to enable fund-raising and consultation to proceed as planned in August.

- a) The site on Thaxted Road can be allocated for the Resource Centre
- b) The Thaxted Road site cannot be allocated to the Resource Centre, therefore the Resource Centre Project Team are advised to pursue the Newport Depot site as before

Background Papers:

Site Options report to Museum Society Management Committee 4th August 2004, and to Resource Centre Project Team 20th August 2005

Use of Gold Enterprise Zone, Elsenham for temporary Museum storage, Report to Community & Leisure Services Committee 2nd November 2005

Site Option at Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden, report to Resource Centre Project Team 27th May 2005

Appendices

1. **Summary of Site Options Investigated**
2. **Summary of Estimated Project Costs**

Summary of Site Options Investigated

This table summarises the results of investigations since 2001 into identifying options for siting the proposed Resource Centre

SITE	✓ PROS	* CONS	VIABILITY
Museum Grade 2 listed building built 1835, on scheduled site (Saffron Walden Castle) <i>Would require New-build extension</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advantages of everything on one site, no travel Small amount of land owned by Museum Society on east side of Museum – no purchase costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resource Centre too large a block, cannot be integrated into site Planning non-starter - inappropriate development for listed 1835 building on scheduled site Available space needed for improved visitor facilities 	Not viable - over-riding issues re. size, type of construction and planning
Newport Depot Uttlesford District Council Depot, site of current off-site store <i>Would require New-build</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land Council-owned – no purchase costs Sufficient space available and access for vans, low-loaders to loading bay Security of Depot curtilage Within development limits – no significant obstacles to planning permission Staff travel 3.5 miles, same as at present Build next to old store – costs and risks of moving collections minimised 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flooding of old off-site store (low floor, poor build) but new building would overcome this Not a public site – but could accommodate visitors by appointment and occasional public event (not a public building like Museum) 	Viable
Stansted Airport Sites on North side of Airport, looked at with BAA <i>New-build with BAA Visitor Centre or adapt existing hangar + outbuildings</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential partnership – site lease by BAA as matching funding If with BAA Visitor Centre, share public facilities Museum presence in Stansted area might assist Service to reach another part of the district 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government report on development of Airport means no security of lease (sites may be needed for Airport extension) BAA plans for visitor centre not so developed or urgent – will delay Resource Centre too much Further away for staff to travel (8 miles) Hangar large but may not have been cost-effective to alter 	Not viable - inability of BAA to offer security of tenure for any site or proceed with plans within an acceptable time-scale
Other UDC Sites	Gold Enterprise Zone – inappropriate buildings and not cost effective, see Report to Community & Leisure Services 2nd November 2004 No other sites available till Thaxted Road site May 2005 – see main report		
ECC Sites			<i>No sites in Uttlesford district available</i>

SITE	✓ PROS	✗ CONS	VIABILITY
<p>Agricultural Buildings Various sites considered, three visited (Hempstead, Clavering, White Roding)</p> <p>Adapt existing buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential to adapt large, basic low-cost buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offered lease only - need to negotiate purchase or long-term lease Costs to adapt unlikely to be as cost-effective as new-build (poor build-quality) Rural locations might be problematic for users, and issues of change of use Lone working issues for staff at isolated rural locations Distance from Museum for staff travel (8 – 30 miles and 2 sites peripheral to district) 	<p>No viable options identified</p> <p>Clavering site and possibility of Defra funding re-investigated February 2005 but rejected by Project Team on grounds of remoteness of site affecting use and costs, ongoing lease costs and inadequate Defra funding compared to an HLF-funded project at Newport</p>
<p>Business Units Various, including Saffron Walden Shire Hill estate</p> <p>Adapt existing buildings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potentially large buildings could provide low-cost shells which could be adapted 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most had inadequate space; one site was too large to consider and not cost-effective to adapt Insufficient security of tenure (rent or lease only) 	<p>No viable options identified (rural district, limited amount of business units available)</p>
<p>Audley End: Braybrooke Estate and English Heritage</p> <p><i>Outbuildings available to adapt or extend?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Near Saffron Walden (about 2 miles) House and surrounding area in care of English Heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No available sites on either Braybrooke Estate or at English Heritage property English Heritage policies and priorities on storage changing – not compatible with seeking a local partnership project 	<p>No viable options</p>
<p>Miscellaneous</p> <p><i>Various local options investigated</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premises in or near Saffron Walden (Carver Barracks, private school, basements in Almshouses and a High Street premises) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Premises on offer did not meet capacity and access criteria Carver Barracks had nothing to offer 	<p>No viable options</p>

Appendix 2
Summary of Estimated Project Costs

Resource Centre building and basic fitting out	650,000
Mobile racking and specialist equipment	100,000
IT provision	10,000
Employment of 2 project staff for 3 years:	
Project Outreach Officer and	75,000
Project Collections Officer	75,000
Employment of short-term documentation/packing assistants (2 FTEs for one year)	30,000
Outreach and Audience Development budget (materials, marketing etc)	20,000
Collections budget (packing materials, supplies, equipment to move)	5,000
Miscellaneous: fees, expenses etc not covered by above	<u>15,000</u>
	£980,000
Say approx. total project cost is approximately	£1,000,000
Add contingency of 10% (HLF min. requirement)	<u>100,000</u>
TOTAL PROJECT COST ANTICIPATED	£1,100,000

Committee: Resources Committee

Date: 28th July 2005

Agenda Item No: 10

Title: Financial Strategy and Budget Process 2006/07

Author: Philip O'Dell 01799-510670

Summary

- 1 This report provides further details of the projected General Fund budget position for 2006/07 and beyond and looks at possible approaches to budget prioritisation to be used in setting targets at the September meeting of this Committee.

Background

- 2 The report to this Committee's last meeting indicated that substantial reductions in spending and/or increases in income were likely to be required to balance the budget for 2006/07 and beyond.

- 3 Although many figures are still uncertain, it is necessary to make some broad assumptions on the budget scenario and to agree some principles for the use of prioritisation in the forthcoming budget process.
- 4 The budget timetable agreed at the last meeting of this Committee indicated that spending targets for individual services would be set at the September meeting, making it important to agree the principles of the approach now.

Updated Projections

- 5 Appendix 1 contains a 3-year budget projection based on the latest information, assumptions and proposals.
- 6 Although several figures are uncertain, the figures do give a clear indication of the scale of the financial challenge facing the Council over the medium term. Budget reductions and /or increased income of approximately £384,000 are required in 2006/07 and an additional £239,000 (to make £623,000 on a cumulative basis) in 2007/08. Year 3 (2008/09) sees the deficit rise to £814,000. It is worth pointing out that the Council's costs increase by around £300,000 per annum due to pay awards and inflation (based on the type of inflation levels currently in the economy), and after an assumed increase of similar percentage terms in fees and charges income, which may not be sustainable. A 1% increase in the Council tax provides an extra £30,627 of spending power for the Council, based on the current tax base.
- 7 The figures in Appendix 1 also assume an increase of 2% per annum in central government funding. This is a change from recent practice, which has assumed no increase. The change has been made in expectation that the strong case being put forward by district councils regarding their spending pressures (including dramatically rising waste management costs) will have an effect. There is also an emerging feeling that the government is keen to respond to potential pressures on council tax levels by being able to say that it continues to provide at least inflation level increases in funding each year. Clearly, any shortfall in this assumed increase would add to the budget shortfall. As it will only be known fairly late in the process, when savings and/or income increases are close to being agreed, it may need to be funded from reserves. The December 2005 Local Government Finance Settlement is expected to announce 3-year grant figures for councils, thereby taking away such uncertainty in future years.
- 8 Initial discussions on this scenario have taken place at both the Executive Management Team and the Joint Management Team. A briefing note for all staff has also been circulated.
- 9 Based on this early sharing of the projected position, several excellent ideas for efficiencies have been put forward from around the Council. These are currently being looked at in detail. There are also however several spending pressures being looked at which are not yet reflected in the Appendix 1 to this report. More will be known when draft Service Plans are completed. One important issue is the recognised need to review staff remuneration, covering

both salary levels and allowances. There is some evidence that the Council's pay levels are falling short of what is required to be competitive in the job market. Detailed analysis will be undertaken in the coming months, with external assistance, and any necessary proposals will be brought to Members, taking on the board the Council's difficult budget position.

- 10 The Service Planning process, which has just commenced, has also requested information on possible efficiencies, both 'cashable' and 'non-cashable' in accordance with the 'Gershon' methodology previously reported to this Committee. At the moment, the request for these efficiencies is based on a 'voluntary' declaration of possibilities, along with potential effects.

Proposals for Prioritisation

- 11 It is proposed to use Prioritisation to both steer the budget reduction exercise, and to assess spending pressures put forward.
- 12 There are 60 services to assess against prioritisation requirements. These are attached at Appendix 2, in the High Medium and Low categories regarding their contribution to the Corporate Plan, as agreed during the process last year. A small number of services have been renamed or rationalised, and the following added:

	Categorisation	Rationale
Executive Programme Office	High Priority	Corporate Plan driver
Internal Audit Partnership	Low Priority	Support Service

- 13 While balancing the budget needs to be seen as a 3 year challenge, the immediate requirement is to find £384,000 to ensure that the 2006/07 requirements are met, assuming all other assumptions hold.
- 14 At the previous meeting of this Committee, Members expressed varying views about how Prioritisation should be used this year. These views mainly revolved around the unit or level at which savings targets were set. There is a particular problem in setting targets for services that involve not much more than one member of staff. Examples are the Animal Warden and Emergency Planning. These type of issues need to be resolved at the September meeting of this Committee, but to give Members an indication of the potential effects of the level of reduction required, the following broad split between High, Medium and Low services in terms of targets could be as follows:

High Priority Services. The net budget for these total approximately £1m. Working on the basis of efficiencies being possible in any service being examined, one approach could be to set such services an overall savings target in line with the Gershon 'cashable' requirement of 1.25%. This would yield approximately £15,000.

Medium Priority Services. The net budget for these services total approximately £3,000,000. If they were collectively asked to find savings at the 'full' Gershon rate (ie 2.5%), this would yield around £75,000.

Low Priority Services. The figures asked of High and Medium Priority Services would leave a requirement for Low Priority services to save around £294,000, which is an average of 4% of such budgets. Included in the Low Priority category are all the Council's central or 'support' services. These are the obvious place to look first for efficiencies, so as to protect front line services, and thankfully are amongst the areas where ideas for efficiencies are starting to emerge, as mentioned in paragraph 9 above. It could also be that a distinction is made between support services and other Low priority services when setting savings targets. The logic of this is that support services, by definition are not of direct benefit to the public, and also that, to some extent the support services can be viewed collectively regarding remodelling workflows, and possible staffing resources. This is not the case with other Low priority services that interface directly with the public and have limited opportunities to work together.

- 15 By the time this Committee meets in September, more details of potential savings will be available, both via the formal service planning process, and the progression of the ideas already put forward. Of course, if High or Medium priority services do put forward efficiencies that exceed the type of indicative levels discussed in paragraph 14, Members will need to decide whether to allow re-investment of such in excess sums into those services, in full or in part, or whether to just accept them and reduce any targets for Low Priority Services accordingly.
- 16 How savings targets would be broken down in detail within the categories of High, Medium and Low priorities is still being considered. There would appear to be benefits in clustering together groups of services which are within the same priority category, have common or similar aims, and which could be looked at collectively in terms of process or resource re-engineering. It would also appear sensible to continue to use the information held on whether each service is high/medium or low in terms of cost and quality, setting different percentage targets accordingly. The service plans currently being prepared will contain this information, updated from last year. On this basis, services with higher costs would be expected to meet more challenging targets.

Towards a Multi-year Approach

- 17 The focus in the earlier paragraphs was about agreeing savings targets for 2006/07. It is however likely that savings will need to be made in the following two years as well. As figures are refined, it is planned to agree 3-year indicative savings targets for services, rather than just a figure for 2006/07. This will provide managers the opportunity to plan their resources over the medium term and give full recognition to any savings above year 1 targets that services manage to make.

Agreeing the final approach to Prioritisation

- 18 It is proposed to explore the detail behind the ideas contained in this report, and other possibilities, by re-convening the Member/officer prioritisation group set up a year ago. It is thought that perhaps two meetings would be enough to

agree the principles of a 3-year approach, with recommendations, including savings targets for individual services or groups of services being brought back to this Committee in September.

Recommended that the Resources Committee:

- Note the possible revisions to the prioritisation approach outlined in this report
- Agree the categorisation of the two new services added to the prioritisation process, as outlined in paragraph 12 of this report
- Re-convene the Member/officer prioritisation group used a year ago, with appropriate Member representation and the objective of developing a detailed 3 year prioritisation approach to meet the overall savings targets included in this report

Background Papers: Prioritisation papers 2004, Budget Book 2005/06, waste management cost projections

GENERAL FUND BUDGET PROJECTIONS

	2006/07 £000	2007/08 £000	2008/09 £000	Notes/assumptions
Base Budget (Surplus) Deficit b/f	(64)	90	255	Assumes - 4.5% Council Tax increase each year - 3% increase in fees and charges yield - Inflation/pay awards fully funded
Un-funded Annual Pension Deficit	305	323	323	Net figure after current Base Budget provision
Provision for increases in refuse collection /recycling costs	375	500	500	Assumes implementation 1/7/06. Subject to agreeing Council policy and receipt of tenders.
Provision for inescapable spending pressures	100	200	300	Assumes £100,000 pa.
	716	1113	1378	
LESS				
Assumed 2% increase in Government funding.	(72)	(145)	(219)	Settlement to be announced December 2005
Proposed target for economies in refuse collection/recycling cost increases.	(130)	(175)	(175)	County Council funding, length of refuse contract, and possible charging for bulk collections being examined. Part year effect in 2006/07.
Proposed use of vacancy factor in staffing budgets.	(100)	(100)	(100)	Formalises current under-spends on staffing budgets
Proposed savings from Integrated Customer Management	(30)	(70)	(70)	2006/07 assumes 1/11/06 live date for Customer Service Centre
Net savings to find via prioritisation process	384	623	814	

