OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
CORPORATE ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN 2012/13

Purpose

1. The Asset Management Plan (AMP) is a high level corporate strategy which establishes the role of the Council's property assets in meeting strategic objectives and the business strategy. The strategy is driven by corporate and service objectives.

2. The purpose of the AMP is to:

   - Give an overview of the Council's strategic direction and objectives and the implications this has for its property;
   - Describe how property needs to change and be used to help achieve those objectives;
   - Describe the objectives for property that arise from this and the strategy for each type of asset;
   - Set out the action to be taken, at a high level;
   - Provide a clear statement of the Council's approach to its property.

3. The Council's property is changing significantly in terms of its size, composition, use and cost so as to positively contribute to meeting the Business Strategy objectives.

4. Although this year's review of the plan proposes that the priorities remain largely the same, it also recommends that there should be a shift and clarification in policy, from reducing the size of the non-school estate by 25% to reducing costs by this amount. This also reflects a proposed shift from a priority of holding property to deliver services, to using our property to help deliver broader objectives of the Council. The proposed change would also better reflect the likely provisions of the Localism Bill.

5. The benefits of good asset management are clearly set out in best practice guidance. Land and buildings are the slowest of all strategic resources to respond to change, due to legal, financial, construction, organisational and development constraints and therefore it is necessary to plan for change in a systematic, long term way. Incremental change will not be sufficient as it cannot respond to the challenges of delivering service transformation and delivery of community objectives. The AMP provides the strategic context in which to deliver a structured and programmed approach to change in assets.

6. There is also an Asset Strategy Implementation Programme which sets out how the strategy will be put in to action. This includes:

   - Property Rationalisation Programme;
   - Corporate Landlord Implementation;

- Procurement of a new Single Service Provider;
- Locality Reviews, Partnership Working & Asset Transfer;
- Improvements to asset management information.

7. The Asset Management Plan considers the period from 2012/13 to 2015/16 to allow forward planning and integration with the Council's Business Strategy; Service and Resource Planning process and Medium Term Financial Plan. It also considers longer term business drivers and asset needs.

Objectives and Business Strategy

8. The County Council's objectives and Business Strategy determine decisions about the Council's direction and therefore its assets.

9. The Corporate Plan contains the following priorities and themes:

Efficient Public Services

- Delivering our savings target;
- Business Strategy including changing the way we work including re-engineering staff work practices and processes; improving our use of technology; rationalising property and other assets; streamlining the organisational structure; giving priority to vital services; exploiting internal and external opportunities to find savings by moving more functions into our 'shared service' centre;
- Community leadership;
- Customer focus;
- Collaborative working: identifying opportunities to work with others to deliver services more effectively, and reviewing existing partnership arrangements to maximise the benefit we receive for the investment we make in them.

World Class Economy

- Supporting growth;
- Oxfordshire City Region Partnership;
- Infrastructure;
- Tackling congestion;
- Young people – improving educational attainment;
- Skill levels – link adult skills provision to the needs of the local economy.

Healthy and Thriving Communities

- Community self-help;
- Closer to Communities: developing our locality-focused approach to service planning and delivery;
- Breaking the cycle of deprivation;
- Prevention: early intervention on adult and children's services;

- Safeguarding: providing a high quality, focused safeguarding service for vulnerable children and adults;
- Demographic Change: supporting the increasing number of older people and people with disabilities to live in their own home rather than a care home.

Environment & Climate Change

- Increasing energy efficiency and reduce emissions;
- Increasing rates of recycling and reducing the amount of household waste;
- Protecting the natural and built environment.

10. The **Business Strategy** requires a rationalisation of the asset base to help deliver savings.

Financial Context

11. The current economic conditions place higher demand on public services and have significant implications on capital and revenue resources. The Council has already experienced a sharp reduction in the value of capital receipts as well as delays in delivery of the disposal programme. The Council is receiving significantly less settlement from central government from 2011/12 onwards.

12. This makes the effective use of the Council's assets and limited capital resources of utmost importance.

How do our Assets Need to Change?

13. The Council's objectives, overall theme of breaking the cycle of deprivation and Business Strategy mean that the asset base will need to change significantly to support delivery of those objectives. The broad asset implications of the objectives are shown below.

Efficient Public Services

- The cost and size of our assets will be significantly reduced;
- The amount of maintenance that can be carried out will reduce and available funding must be used to support the Business Strategy;
- Property assets must be treated as a corporate and community resource and their future planned with our partners;
- Investment will need to be focussed on priority services and joint asset planning with partners.

World Class Economy

- Infrastructure will need to be provided for growth areas;
- Sufficient school pupil places will need to be provided.

Healthy and Thriving Communities

- Changes to the provision of adult social care will mean changes to the property estate;
- Encouraging community self help through joint and community use of assets;
- The need to improve health and well-being will require more effective working and co-location with our partners.

Environment and Climate Change
- The environmental impact of our property will need to be reduced and the estate be made more resilient to climate change to minimise impacts on services and reduce costs;
- Appropriate facilities for recycling and waste disposal will be required.

The Council's Property Portfolio

14. The Council has approximately 830 properties, the vast majority of which are operational rather than investment properties. They have an asset value of approximately of £1.2 billion (£1.516 billion). The main property types are:

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- secondary schools
- primary schools
- special schools
- offices
- fire stations
- libraries
- museums

- day centres
- highway depots
- staff houses
- children's centres
- early intervention hubs
- waste recycling centres
- Homes for older people

15. The Council makes significant investment in the portfolio each year, through the capital programme and the repairs and maintenance programme. This has achieved significant improvement in schools, offices, children's centres and early intervention hubs over the last five years. However, only 45% of the portfolio is fully fit for purpose and there is required maintenance of £77 million. The challenge is to reduce the size of the portfolio and reconfigure it in a way that is strategically driven, affordable and enables and facilitates change to meet the Council's service delivery and broader objectives.

Property Objectives

16. In view of the Council's objectives and Business Strategy the Council's property objectives are set out below. The purpose of these objectives is to set out the overall approach to property.

Objective 1   Reduce the cost of the property portfolio by 25% whilst using our property to deliver the Council's broader objectives and

support service delivery

Objective 2   Change the portfolio to support and enable locality working

Objective 3   Increase co-location of services and sharing with partners and community organisations to improve service delivery, reduce costs and achieve broader objectives

Objective 4   Put in place property that is fit for purpose and supports corporate priorities and service business models

Objective 5   Reduce energy consumption and avoid or reduce tax liabilities

Approach to Assets

Schools

17.   The highest priority for investment in the schools estate is ensuring an overall sufficiency of school places to cope with the growing pupil population. This arises from a combination of increased birth rate and inward migration to existing communities (to be met, primarily, from 'Basic Need' funding) and from projected substantial housing development on a number of strategic sites (to be met from Developer Contributions).

18.   In addition, the Council plans to tackle repairs and maintenance issues in the worst condition school buildings through the Schools Structural Maintenance Programme provided that it continues to receive the capital maintenance allocation from central government and has sufficient resources available to deliver the Basic Needs Programme over the medium term.

19.   The strategy is complicated by the conversion to academy status of schools currently maintained by the Council. This transfers the entire repairs and maintenance responsibility to the schools themselves whilst leaving the Council with the statutory responsibility for ensuring sufficient places, but without the power to require academies to expand to accommodate more pupils. The Council, therefore, regularly adjusts the Schools Structural Maintenance Programme taking into account resources implications of the proposed and on-going conversation in line with the changes made to the LEA settlements figures by the DfE. In addition, where a converting school has acquired the freehold of its site and buildings, these will transfer to the academy, leaving the Council without veto over disposals or call upon any capital receipts.

20.   The outcome of the post-James Review consultation on schools capital investment may further complicate the position by introducing central procurement of brand new schools (primarily to meet the needs of strategic housing sites) whilst establishing local pooled capital 'pots' to meet all other capital needs of publicly funded schools.

Offices

21. The Asset Rationalisation Programme will reduce the number of Council offices from 45 to 24 (including the Early Intervention Hubs) by 2014/15, with reduced staff numbers across the organisation allowing staff to be accommodated within the retained offices. The first major milestone in the programme was the vacation of the Cricket Road Centre in September 2011.

22. The medium to long term vision for the office estate is likely to involve further consolidation and be based around a four-hub model (Oxfordshire North (Banbury), Oxfordshire South (Abingdon), Oxford City Centre and Outer Oxford (Unipart House), supported by the Early Intervention Hubs. This approach is subject to approval in early 2012.

23. Under-pinning this long term office strategy is a need for a corporate New Ways of Working/Agile Working policy linking property, ICT strategy and HR policy to enable the most efficient and effective use of resources.

Libraries

24. A public consultation exercise on the future of the library service has been undertaken and closed at the end of September. The proposals for the future of the service will then be considered by the County Council's Cabinet in December 2011. Cabinet will consider the report on the outcomes of the consultation and will agree the way forward for the library service and its savings targets for 2012/13 to 2014/15.

Fire Stations

25. The future locations of fire stations will be based on meeting the needs determined by changing demographics, the increasing demands on infrastructure and associated operational risks - linked to the development of local communities and partner agencies (e.g. the Police and the Military), assessed against corporately-established response times across the county.

26. There remains an aspiration to re-provide the fire station at Rewley Road in Oxford, with the potential to co-locate a number of the functions it accommodates, perhaps as part of the Northern Gateway development. This would release some or all of the Rewley Road Fire Station site for redevelopment, depending on the ability to maintain appropriate emergency response levels for the historically important city centre area.

27. Furthermore, if suitable sites can be found that do not have a detrimental impact on response times, there is also an aspiration to relocate Banbury Fire Station to a location outside the town centre and closer to the M40. The release of the Bicester Fire Station site could enable the

redevelopment of Queens Avenue and there may be potential for co-location of the fire station with partners.

28. Realistic fire fighting training is currently provided at Rewley Road Fire Station but there are issues with the impact of smoke on neighbouring properties. Options will therefore be considered for re-provision of this training function on other sites.

Homes for Older People

29. Homes for Older People are all leased to the Oxfordshire Care Partnership and the Council has been working with OCP to deliver the first phase of re-providing seven of the homes that were no longer fit for purpose. This is almost complete. Phase 2 will address the remaining eight homes. Whilst these currently meet standards there are likely to be implications for each arising out of the proposals in the review of the OCP contract which will deliver the changes to service strategy whereby there will be a withdrawal from residential home provision to be replaced with Extra Care Housing, specialist nursing and dementia homes either on existing or new sites.

Older People's Day Centres

30. As part of the Day Opportunities Strategy traditional older people's day centres are being replaced by resource centres. This has been completed in Bicester, Oxford, Abingdon and Witney and one is currently being built in Banbury. This leaves a requirement for Resource Centres in Didcot, Wantage and Wallingford.

Learning Disabilities Day Centres

31. This service is due to go out to tender in Spring 2012 and the service specification is currently being written. It is not clear yet what the property implications for the learning disability day centre will be. The new providers may either retain them under leases or choose to provide services in their own premises.

Special Needs Housing

32. A strategy for the delivery of Extra Care Housing is now established. This need is considered in all Council disposals, as well as any Section 106 bids, and through working closely with District Councils and Housing Providers.

33. An overall housing strategy is currently being prepared by Social & Community Services, which will set out the need and delivery strategies for all the areas of special needs housing, including older people, but also learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health. Whilst the demographic drivers are not on the same scale as for older people, often the need is much more specific and specialist and cannot be achieved through the normal affordable housing routes. The new strategy document

will set out these specifics and the same principles will be applied with regard to the disposal of sites as for ECH.

Early Intervention Hubs/Satellites

34.   As part of the CEF restructure, seven Early Intervention Hubs (EIH) were created across the county, supported by five Early Intervention Satellites (EIS). Six EIHs are now operational and the seventh in Witney is due for completion in Spring 2012, with the service currently being provided from temporary facilities at Thorney Leys, Witney.

35.   The EIHs provide a single, integrated early intervention service for children, young people and families with additional and complex needs and the Service is provided by both Council staff and partner organisations. The EIHs/EISs also provide drop-in office accommodation for staff and support the Council's main hub offices.

Children's Centres

36.   The Council has now completed provision of its Phase 3 children's centre programme and there is now a children's centre accessible to all families across Oxfordshire. The Service is run by a number of different providers, including schools, the Council, private and voluntary organisations.

37.   A countywide review of all children's centre services in Oxfordshire is underway and it is expected that the process for reviewing and re-commissioning services will be completed by March 2013. A funding condition imposed by the then DCSF for Phase 3 capital builds states they should be used to provide services for young people for the next 25 years.

Children's Homes

38.   The Council has two children's homes within the county. Thornbury House children's home for boys was re-provided in a new building on the same site in 2011 and is now known as 40 The Moors, Kidlington. Maltfield House in Headington provides accommodation for girls. Both are now fit for purpose.

Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) unit

39.   The Capital Investment Board has approved a proposal for capital investment for an Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) unit within Oxfordshire and a feasibility study to convert the Ormerod special school site into suitable accommodation is underway.

Waste Recycling Centres

40.   The Council has eight waste recycling centres across the county. The City and Districts continue to improve recycling through kerbside collection.

Every house in Oxfordshire now has a comprehensive kerbside collection that reduces the need for visits to the waste recycling centres. The role and service of the waste recycling centres is changing.

41. A number of the current sites require significant investment to bring the facilities up to date as the current infrastructure is deteriorating. Also, there are a number of sites with temporary planning permissions that are due to expire over the next few years and these will not be renewed.

42. The Service proposals rely on providing facilities that are fit for purpose and well located to the main population centres to complement the kerbside collection undertaken by the Districts.

43. A new facility is proposed for Kidlington; Redbridge is to be refurbished and modernised, and a new site is to be established in Banbury (replacing Alkerton). Dean Pit, Ardley and Stanford in the Vale are to be closed and Drayton, Dix Pit and Oakley Wood will continue as existing.

Registration Offices

44. The Registration Service will continue to operate from nine sites across the county.

45. A feasibility study is underway to relocate Oxford register office from Tidmarsh Lane into County Hall to enable disposal of the existing building and make better use of County Hall.

46. Didcot registration office is within the library and will need to be considered alongside proposals for the town centre redevelopment.

Highway Depots

47. The Highways contract allows for investment of £5m in highway depots sites, which will be funded through revenue savings. Atkins has licence agreements for the use of Deddington, Milton Common, Drayton, Chipping Norton and Woodcote depot sites. A depot strategy will be developed which will determine where capital will be invested. Feasibility studies will then be undertaken.

48. The priorities for capital investment are:

- Office accommodation, including refurbishment of existing buildings at Drayton and replacement of temporary buildings at Deddington. This is likely to involve the relocation of some staff at Ron Groves House, Kidlington to Deddington;
- Increased salt storage capacity (Deddington, Chipping Norton, Drayton and Milton Common);
- Other operational improvements, including storage and hard-standing
- Vehicle maintenance, including possible co-location with the Integrated Transport Unit.

Adult Learning

49.   Adult Learning is currently being restructured with its administrative functions being concentrated into four area offices – Unipart House, Kidlington Adult Learning, Union Street (East Oxford) and Grove Adult Learning Centre.

50.   Permanent staffing will no longer be provided at the other centres and any staffing will be on the basis of need. Premises will continue to be required for service delivery. Co-location of Adult Learning accommodation with other Council and partner services will be pursued.

51.   Wallingford Adult Learning premises on the Wallingford School site will become surplus to requirements. There is a priority need for premises in Didcot and opportunities will be pursued as part of the town centre redevelopment. Options to meet a priority need in Witney will be considered. Section 106 contributions will provide improved facilities in Bicester.

Museums/Cultural Buildings

52.   The Museum & Heritage Service's public museum is Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock, supported by a back office function and storage facility at the Standlake Museum Resource Centre.

53.   Discussions have recently taken place between the Council and the Soldiers of Oxfordshire to consider the feasibility of building a new museum on part of the Woodstock site. This would have a Joint Operational Agreement for the management of the site.

54.   Standlake Resource Centre has recently been extended and now provides a sufficient principal storage facility.

Outdoor Education Centres

55.   The Outdoor Education Centres (one in Oxfordshire and three out of county) are required to be self-financing before 2015/16. The Service is on target to meet this objective.

Staff Housing

56.   The general approach to vacant staff housing was agreed by the Cabinet in July 2005 and seeks to reduce the size of the staff housing estate where there is no school need for the accommodation and where the property can be easily separated from the main school site. The agreed approach is as follows:

- If the house is an integral part of the school site, the school should be allowed to decide whether it wishes to take over the building for teaching or office functions, or whether it wishes to retain it for caretaker use in which case either the responsibility for paying the rent subsidy should transfer to the school, or the school should consider whether the rent should be increased so that no rent subsidy is required;
- If the house is part of the school site, but could potentially be separated to allow a disposal, the Council should review the position with the school before making a firm decision as to whether a sale can be achieved;
- If the house is not part of the school site the Council should pursue disposal of the house, unless there are particular reasons why this is not appropriate.

Organisational Arrangements

57. The governance structure for asset management comprises of the Capital Investment Board (CCMT & Cabinet) and the Capital & Asset Programme Board. The governance assists with:

- Changing the culture and approach to asset management to achieve a Corporate Landlord approach
- Improving planning of capital investment
- Making more effective use of assets
- Enhanced cross-service working
- Improved working and asset sharing with partners

58. The role of the Capital Investment Board is to set the vision and agenda for capital investment and asset planning to put in place the next generation of infrastructure and to deal with the asset implications of the Business Strategy.

59. The role of the Capital & Asset Programme Board is to provide a single point of contact for all capital and asset matters, to ensure development and delivery of the asset strategy, enhance cross-service and organisation working, develop a programme of strategic capital investment and to provide officer leadership and challenge. The C&APB acts as the Programme Board for the Asset Strategy Implementation Programme, receiving bi-monthly RAG status report on all strands of the work.

60. Property & Facilities was restructured in November 2010 to allow a refocusing of resources to increase the capacity for strategic work, and to ensure that all asset considerations are made in a corporate context. A further restructure will take place in 2012 to ensure appropriate arrangements are in place for management of and effective working with the new Single Service Provider from July 2012.

Strategic Actions

61. The main strategic property actions required to support the achievement of the Council's objectives are to have:

By the end of 2011/12

- Property rationalisation underway meeting 2011/12 savings – **on target.**
- Arrangements in place for joint asset planning with partners –**Joint mapping undertaken. Locality reviews commenced.**
- Workplace strategy agreed to enable our staff to work flexibly and effectively and to make the most effective use of our property assets **– report on approach to be considered by extended CCMT in January 2012**.
- A Corporate Landlord approach to assets in place, with all relevant non-school premises budgets transferred to Property & Facilities **– on target.**

By the end of 2012/13

- The new procurement arrangements for Property & Facilities in place and able to deliver the savings required by the Business Strategy **– completion July 2012.**
- Review the Asset Transfer and Disposals Policy **– by May 2012.**

By the end of 2014/15

- Delivered the property savings required by the Business Strategy **– on target.**