

**Asset Management Plan
for Oxfordshire County Council
DRAFT**



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1 Purpose

1.1 Overall Aim

The County Council holds property to sustain and support its corporate objectives as reflected in the Corporate Plan and associated Business Strategy.

The Asset Management Plan (Operational Property Strategy, excluding Schools) is a document designed to set out the future direction for managing the County Council's property assets. By the very nature of the challenges facing the County Council in the medium term, the Plan needs to provide clarity in terms of objectives but have flexibility to respond to changes in circumstances.

An organisation of the stature and standing of the County Council needs to have an operational and asset portfolio that is both fit for purpose and capable of being adapted to future requirements.

The Council's property is changing significantly in terms of its size composition use and cost in response to changes in the size of the organisation and the way services are delivered. The principles set out in this Plan form the basis on which implementation plans will be developed and taken forward into delivery.

The Plan builds upon last year's document and continues with the shift in priorities from holding property to delivering our services and ensuring our approach to property delivers broader objectives of the Council.

The Plan will continue to be reviewed and updated on a regular basis.

1.2 Asset Management Plan – Objectives

This 5-year Plan will provide a framework within which Oxfordshire County Council adopts a strategic approach to securing the operational and financial benefits of a property estate that supports the provision of services using industry best practice whilst at the same time securing the maximum benefit for the local economy.

This approach provides for;

- Developing a vision for County Council property assets over the next five years that supports the County Council's Corporate Plan and Commissioning Agenda
- Setting out a strategic approach for the County Council's property assets
- Shaping the Council's operational property estate to optimise service provision and meet the needs of residents

- Ensuring that operational properties are appropriately located, provide flexible accommodation at low cost, in good condition and accessible to all.
- Achieving a reduction in the overall use of operational space to achieve savings
- Reducing the running costs of buildings and benchmark costs in use against peer group Authorities
- Ensuring the procurement of works for buildings meets sustainable design criteria and that buildings are maintained and managed for maximum energy efficiency.
- Challenging the business case for retaining properties, and exercise Head Lease break clauses, sell/lease surplus properties to achieve best consideration, capital receipts and revenue savings
- Developing an approach that ensures letting income from the County Council's property estate is maximised.
- Developing stronger working across the broader range of property assets held by public sector partners with a view to improving service delivery overall and reducing operational costs

1.3 Carillion/Capita Partnership

The Council has appointed Carillion as its preferred partner in providing a range of property and facilities management services over a 10-year period. The partnership is the key delivery mechanism for this Asset Management Plan.

In addition the contract provides additional services including property management, facilities management, energy management and capital works services.

The relationship between the Partnership and Oxfordshire County Council is the cornerstone to the successful provision of the asset strategy plan. Working in association the parties should deliver a new estate designed to be fit for purpose and which achieves the maximum achievable reductions in operational and property costs whilst delivering the optimum level of services to the community.

2 The Asset Management Plan

Asset Management is the generic process that ensures that land and buildings, or the asset base of an organisation, are structured in the best corporate interests of the organisation concerned. It aligns the property asset base with the organisation's corporate goals and objectives and responds to all functional and service delivery requirements of the organisation.

The Asset Management Plan is a key corporate strategic tool which sets out Oxfordshire County Council's property objectives focussing on how the Council intends to utilise its asset base to deliver its Corporate Objectives.

2.1 Why formulate an Asset Management Plan?

An Asset Management Plan is of importance and relevance to all employees, partners and stakeholders of an organisation including the Elected Members and the general public, together with all other relevant public sector and partner organisations.

The Oxfordshire County Council 5-year Asset Management Plan will be used by elected Members, officers and partner organisations to support/inform any decision related to property assets and should be treated as the key reference point to which all future decisions in relation to the property portfolio are referenced.

2.2 What will this Plan achieve?

The Asset Management Plan provides the template and framework for how the County Council will seek to utilise its land and property assets as a corporate resource. The Asset Management Plan sets out the Council's vision, aspirations and objectives for its land and property assets portfolio, and this will be used to develop and deliver an implementation plan that achieves these outcomes.

Oxfordshire County Council has statutory and other obligations to deliver various functions and services within the county. These include social care, education and library services, maintaining the roads network and waste management and community safety services through to the Fire & Rescue Service. How the property portfolio will play a vital role in the provision of these services is the key output of the Asset Strategy Plan.

3 Oxfordshire County Council - Corporate Plan

3.1 About Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire has a population in the region of 650,000 people. The population is increasing but the county retains a predominantly rural aspect and is the least densely populated county in the South East of England.

The county includes three areas of outstanding natural beauty: the Cotswolds, the Chilterns and the North Wessex Downs and is bisected by the River Thames. Oxfordshire is at the north-western edge of the South East region and, with its central location in England, has strong links to London and the Midlands, as well as west to the Cotswolds and along the M4 corridor.

- 87% of residents regard the county as a good place to live (Place Survey 2008/09).

- The population is healthier and more prosperous than most other areas.
- The local economy contributes £15.4 billion to the national economy.
- Unemployment is amongst the lowest in the country, with fewer than 2% of residents claiming job seekers allowance (December 2011).
- Residents and businesses benefit from the county's position at the heart of the UK rail and road transport network.

Oxfordshire however faces a number of significant challenges:

- More than 30% of the county's workforce is currently employed in the public sector, making it particularly vulnerable to the impact of budget cuts.
- Housing availability and affordability remains a problem.
- There are pockets of significant deprivation, with 18 local areas in the county within the 20% most deprived in England.
- Educational attainment at GCSE level is below the regional and national averages and 6% of 16-18 year olds are not in employment, education or training. These factors contribute to the skills gap experienced by around one in five employers in Oxfordshire.
- Positive improvements in life expectancy mean the County has a growing older population; the number of residents aged over 85 is predicted to more than double by 2033, presenting challenges to service delivery.

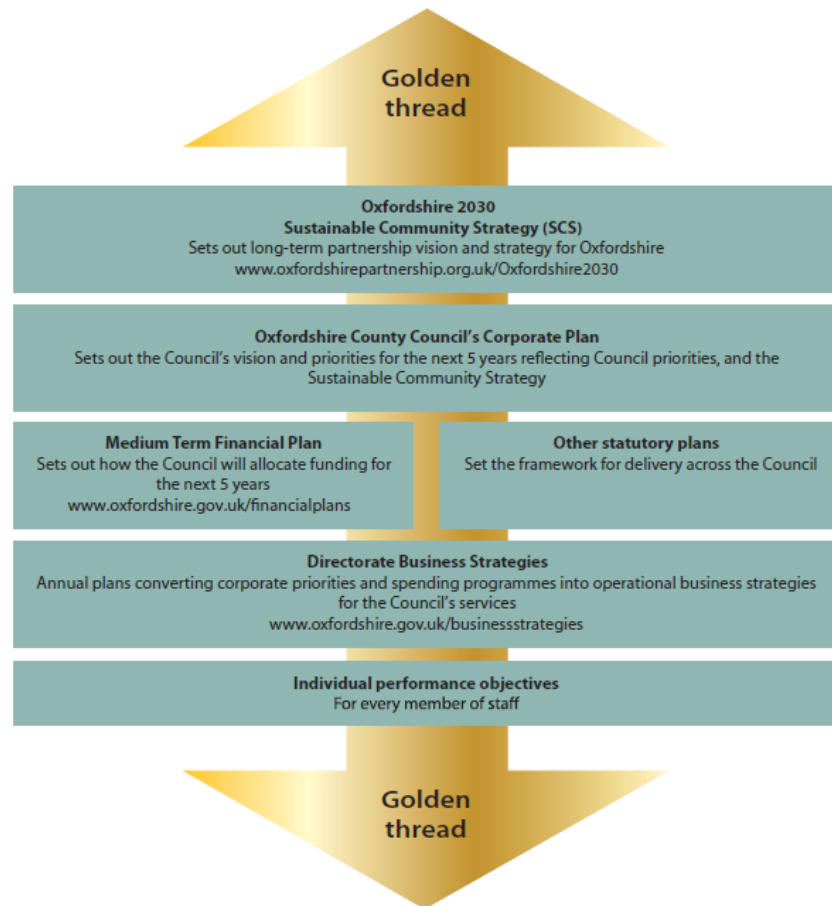
More key facts about Oxfordshire available on the Oxfordshire Data Observatory website: www.oxfordshireobservatory.info/aboutoxfordshiredata

3.2 Thriving Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire County Council has an overall goal of a Thriving Oxfordshire. This is predicated against vibrant and active communities, and a sense of place; maximising economic growth whilst ensuring that the fruits of growth are enjoyed by all parts of the community and minimising any negative impact on the environment.

These corporate objectives fit into the 'golden thread' which links all of the Council's work from top level objectives through to service delivery and ensures that the Council has a co-ordinated approach to future challenges.

The Council's strategic objectives continue to be consistent with Oxfordshire 2030, the county's long term plan. Despite significant changes to the financial and policy environment that the Council and its local partners face, they remain committed to working together to deliver the longer term ambitions for Oxfordshire.



3.3 Key Issues under the Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan sets out the key issues to be addressed.

Localism Act 2011 – *a range of measures to support decentralisation including new community rights, reforms to planning processes and empowerment of local government and local communities.*

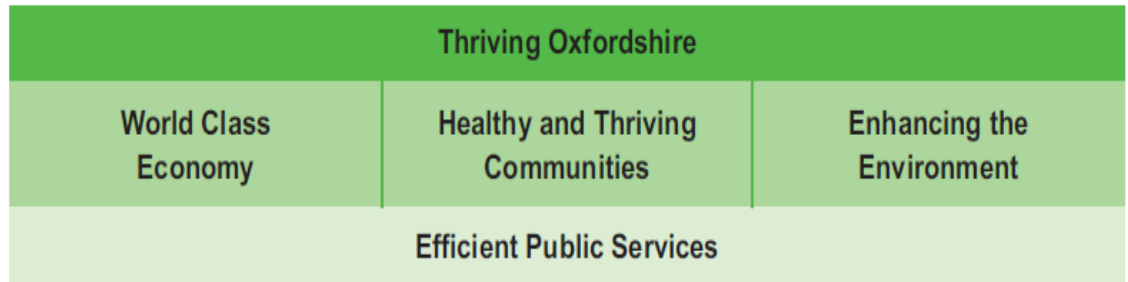
Open Public Services – *to increase choice, decentralise power, and diversify public service provision and increase accountability and transparency*

Schools – *increasing emphasis upon school autonomy, through Free Schools and Academies, and a more specific role for local authorities in supporting those most in need, thereby changing the relationship between the Council and local schools*

Strategic National Planning framework – *a local leadership role to align funding streams and deliver priority outcomes for Oxfordshire*

Police and Social Responsibility Act 2011 – *established the role of a Police and Crime Commissioner for each Police Authority area responsible for allocating local community safety funding which had previously been provided direct to the Council*

To deliver a Thriving Oxfordshire the Council will work towards the following strategic objectives:



3.4 How do our Assets need to change?

The Council's strategic objectives, set out in part above, will mean that the property asset will need to change. The broad implications for the property asset are:

Efficient Public Services

- *The cost and size of the asset base will need reduce;*
- *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 and children's social care will mean changes to the property estate;*
- *Encouraging community self help through joint and community use of assets;*
- *The need to improve the intensity of asset utilisation will require more effective working and co-location with our partners.*

Environment and Climate Change

- *The environmental impact of 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.*

3.5 Property Policy Objectives

The property policy objectives for 2013/14 onwards reflect the outputs required from and by the asset management strategy:

1. Reduce the cost of the property portfolio by 25% in line with Medium Term Financial Plan savings targets for future years.

Actions:

- A Deliver the Asset Rationalisation Programme to the end of 2014/15
- B Deliver savings on property costs in line with the MTFP
- C Identify opportunities for additional savings through Locality Reviews and working with partners
- D Introduce a Corporate Agile Workplace policy.

2. Put in place property that is fit for purpose and is aligned and supports corporate priorities and service business strategies.

Actions:

- A Identify and programme priority repair and maintenance requirements
- B Allocate capital resources to bring forward schemes to address priority needs
- C Maximise utilisation of all retained property assets.

3. Increase co-location of services and sharing with partner and community organisations within localities to improve service delivery, reduce costs and achieve broader corporate objectives.

Actions:

- A Lead on the Oxfordshire Collaborative Asset Management Group.
- B Undertaking on-going programme of Locality Reviews.

4. Use surplus property assets to contribute towards corporate objectives for regeneration in the County.

Actions:

- A Identify all potential surplus property assets through rationalisation and the asset disposals programme.
- B Explore all potential regeneration or redevelopment opportunities in priority locations

5. In working with others to realise opportunities for regeneration, if it is required, explore capital investment opportunities, including potential acquisitions, where a robust business case demonstrates an enhanced revenue income or capital receipt or improved asset value.

Actions:

- A Consider any site assembly opportunities to generate a subsequent enhanced disposal.

B Work with partners to explore potential alternative and more beneficial uses for existing property assets including potential Local Asset Backed Vehicle arrangements.

6. Maintain energy costs at 2010/11 levels as far as is cost-effective, whilst meeting Government carbon budgets through investment in energy efficiency and renewable energy measures.

Actions:

- A Develop and implement a ‘whole building’ programme of energy investments across the estate
- B Embed a set of low energy behaviours across the organisation
- C Provide targeted feed-back to building users to help manage energy use effectively day-to-day

4 The County Council’s Property Portfolio

4.1 Overview

The property portfolio comprises approximately 830 operational properties. The main property types are as follows:

- 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

Property Category	Value (£'000)
Operational (Other land and Buildings)	989,471
Non-operational - Investment	4,521
Non-operational – Surplus/Vacant	3,997
Total Asset Value	997,989

The Council makes significant investment in the portfolio each year, through the capital programme and the repairs and maintenance programme. The Council had identified that only 45% of the portfolio was fully fit for purpose and there was required maintenance of £65.8 million.

4.2 A Future Approach to Property Assets

Effective Asset Management requires a strategic policy allied to resources which can respond to change within legal, financial, construction, organisational and development constraints. Planning for change in advance is essential given that acquiring or disposing of properties can be protracted.

The successful implementation of the broader objectives of Oxfordshire County Council will rely upon the Council's ability to clearly determine the following:

- What land and property assets does the Council hold;
- Under what legal basis are these assets held;
- What is the purpose or reason for holding each asset;
- Who uses the asset and what is it used for;
- What is the level of asset utilisation;
- What is the value of the asset; (value can be for different purposes)
- What is the condition and life of the asset;
- What does it cost to hold the asset;
- What does it cost to retain and maintain the asset;
- How Energy Efficient is the asset
- What is the cost per square metre of holding the asset;

The process of accumulating, updating and reviewing this data is in hand through the data warehouse facility. The Integrated Property Asset Management System with a single view of the asset will enable comprehensive property asset performance information to be analysed and reported as required. This information will enable better strategic decision making and inform the ongoing development of the Asset Management Plan. This will also enable the Council to strategically and corporately assess how it needs to act and respond to the challenges of delivering service transformation and also meet cost saving targets whilst still providing effective and efficient public service within Oxfordshire.

4.3 Condition Survey Information

As part of the above process, one of the key elements will be the ongoing assessment of the condition of the Council's property assets and the ability to effectively programme and fund the necessary repair and maintenance requirements. The recent condition survey results have identified total required maintenance of £65.8m (inclusive of schools delegated items), £23.9m of which is within the top two priority categories of urgent or essential works necessary within 2 years.

4.4 Corporate Landlord

All land and property assets are managed under a 'Corporate Landlord' function.

The Corporate Landlord Function allows an integrated and strategic asset management service that responds to all property and accommodation requirements across the Council and delivers outcomes that include:

- Informed strategic asset management decision making where all issues, opportunities and potential improvements are identified, understood and managed under the Asset Management Plan.
- Improved financial decision making relating to property assets and programmed capital and revenue expenditure where life cycle costs are minimised where possible and appropriate.

The identification and delivery of potential Capital Receipts and investment opportunities via a strategic disposal / development review process.

- The identification of potential collaboration and efficiency opportunities across the Council and other public sector partners to maximise and extract as much value from the Councils retained Corporate Land and Property Assets Portfolio as possible.

The recent completion of the ATRIUM database will facilitate the ability to accurately forecast/identify internal costs.

Under the Corporate Landlord approach the directorates and services become notional tenants and make use of the property in delivering a service. There are specific responsibilities that fall both to Corporate Landlord and Notional Tenant, depending on the nature of the asset and the service.

4.5 Atrium Database

The ATRIUM database forms part of the PIMS (Property Management Information System) central database that, combined with the Corporate Landlord Function, will enable;

- A single view of all the Council's corporate property assets
- Corporate and central management for the entire assets portfolio that enables service delivery providers to focus solely on service delivery requirements.
- A strategic planning capability to meet changing operational and service delivery needs including asset rationalisation and Agile Working.

- Informed strategic and corporate decision making on all land and property matters.
- Real and complete cost information on use and effectiveness of property holdings.
- A real and actual cost in operation and a cost in the holding of property assets together with the ability to re-charge on a real cost basis.
- An integrated approach to meeting community and service needs.
- Rationalisation and investment strategy forward planning and management.

The information from the ATRIUM database will be used as the bedrock for all future decisions in relation to the property asset base.

4.6 Adapting the Property Estate

The County Council's property portfolio comprises both operational and non-operational property. The portfolio should be held purely in order to support the functionality of Oxfordshire County Council as a provider of services. The operational portfolio will be kept under review in order to ensure it remains fit for purpose. As part of this on-going work, opportunities to rationalise the property estate will be explored, including where appropriate by disposal through questioning existing policies against the following criteria;

- *Is there a clear rationale for owning or holding properties and if a particular asset does not assist service delivery or generate income, is there any beneficial purpose in its retention?*
- *Is there a regular process of review and reporting in place to confirm whether or not individual properties are fit for their intended purpose? Are decisions to retain sites and properties regularly tested?*
- *Is the Council able to quantify the performance and return from any given property asset and particularly its income generating investment property assets?*
- *Has the Council set objectives for its property assets and is performance of the assets monitored to ensure that these objectives are being met and are still relevant?*
- *Is there a clear link between the Council's property assets and its wider corporate objectives?*

4.7 The Current Asset Rationalisation Programme

Medium Term Financial Plan savings on property running costs to the end of 2014/15 are being delivered through the Asset Rationalisation Programme. The critical lease surrenders within the MTFP period are Clarendon House, Oxford, and Windrush Court, Abingdon, both in June 2014. These properties will be vacated in line with those lease timescales, with staff accommodated within the retained estate through more efficient and effective use of office space and the implementation of agile working. This will include the relocation of the Customer Service Centre to County Hall in 2014.

Additional savings beyond the MTFP period are likely to arise from the implementation of a corporate agile working policy ensuring office space is minimised and that other significant lease surrenders can be realised beyond 2014/15. Locality reviews are also likely to lead to other opportunities for rationalisation of the estate.

In the mid-term the opportunity to surrender the leases on space within Unipart House amongst others in May 2017 provides a need for holding a medium-long term office strategy.

The Council's office strategy is currently based on the following principles:

- *Minimising the size of the office portfolio* – ensuring that space requirements take account of a smaller organisation, whose staff work in a more agile way supported by technological improvements
- *Co-location of staff and services* – proactively realising opportunities to co-locate with the districts, the health sector and other public sector bodies
- *Using investment in the office portfolio to support the local economy* – where there is an identifiable need for investment ensuring that it supports wider economic growth priorities

The office model for Oxfordshire will comprise the following office hubs:

- *A northern office hub* – based at Samuelson House in Banbury, but working with partners to explore opportunities for co-location of services as part of wider proposals for the regeneration of Banbury
- *A southern office hub* – based around Abbey House in Abingdon but potentially working with partners to explore opportunities that support shared ambitions for economic growth

- *A central office hub* – based around presence in Oxford, with a balance between presence in the city centre and other locations across the City, including the eastern side as well as potentially the west end.

It is currently anticipated that there will continue to be a need for a satellite office to serve the west of the county in Witney.

It is currently anticipated that Graham Hill House in Oxford (trading standards) and Signal Court in Eynsham (Countryside Services) are retained as specialist offices due to service requirements for adjoining warehouse/workshop accommodation and recent capital investment.

4.8 Agile Working

The development and implementation of a corporate agile working policy will provide clarity on the likely size of the organisation in future years and the extent to which changes in work styles and co-location will impact on office requirements. This work will inform the medium-long term vision for the office estate and those offices that are retained or disposed of. The relocation of services based in Abingdon to Abbey House is being used as a pilot to develop the County Council's approach to agile working.

In October 2013 Oxfordshire County Council instigated an agile working review across the entire office estate in order to identify a space standard and to inform the Asset Strategy Review with regard to future accommodation needs.

The successful implementation of 'Agile Working' requires a change in the way people work which in turn relies on three elements being put in place;

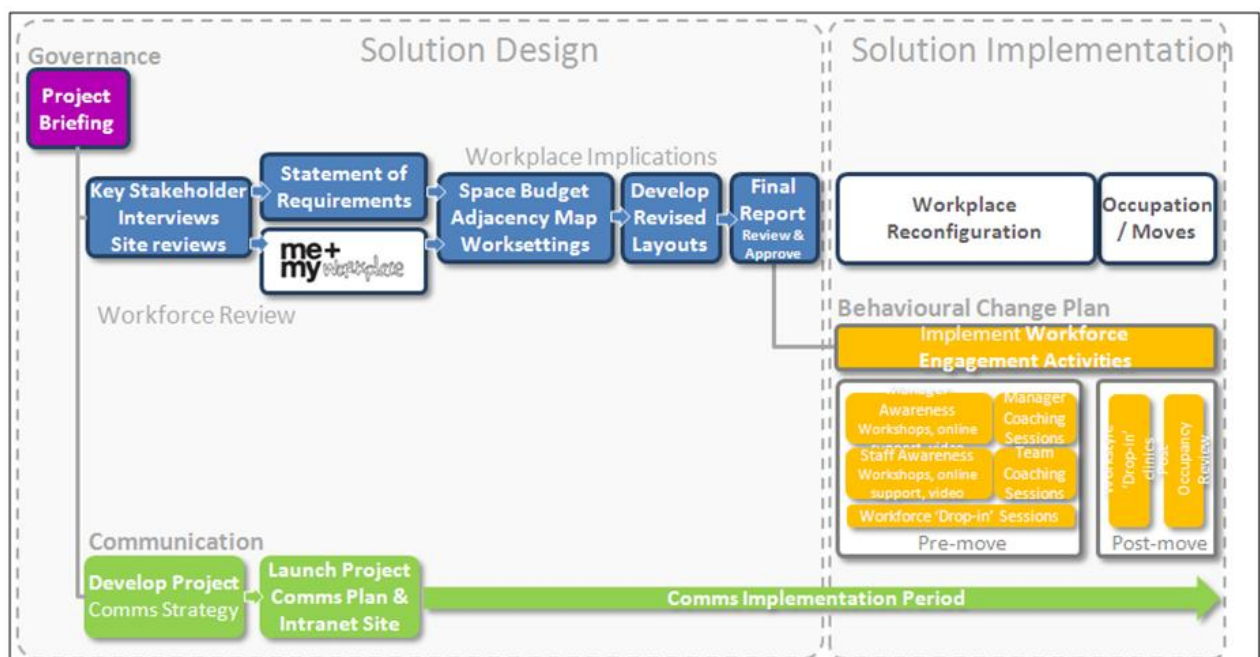
Sponsorship – the initiative needs strong and dynamic leadership from the top of the organisation: agile working is a business transformation initiative

Communication – the workforce needs to understand what is happening, why and when: it requires a dedicated approach to communications.

Engagement – the workforce needs to be, and feel to be engaged in the process of changing how they work; staff members are much more likely to accept new technology, desk sharing and flexible working, if they have been involved in the process of creating the agile working solution.

The review, which will report to the County Council in early 2014 will identify the opportunities and benefits of adopting 'Agile Working' and provide a solution which reflects the needs of Oxfordshire County Council over the next five years.

To secure a benefit over the full term the report will provide a methodology for supporting the OCC in the development and delivery of agile working solutions which reflect the true workforce and organisational needs from solution to implementation as follows.



4.9 Disposals

Land and property assets held by the Council should be considered for disposal as surplus to requirements if any of the following statements apply:

- The asset no longer makes a positive contribution to the current delivery of Council services.
- The asset has no potential for future strategic regeneration and/or redevelopment purposes.
- An alternative site can provide a more cost effective and/or efficient point of service delivery.
- There is no adopted and resourced Council plan/policy/strategy, which will bring the asset into beneficial use in the foreseeable future.

- There is no potential for advantageous shared use with partners.

In general the Council is required to achieve the 'best consideration reasonably obtainable' when it is disposing of land or buildings under s.123 Local Government Act 1972. If it seeks to dispose of land or buildings below the market value, it must obtain the consent of the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

However, the Council (having regard to the Crichel Down rules whereby property must in certain circumstances first be offered back to the original owners) will use its powers under the General Disposal Consent 2003 to transfer land at less than its market value, without the need to seek specific permission from the Secretary of State, provided that:

- a) The purpose for which the land is to be transferred is likely to contribute to the 'promotion or improvement' of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area; and
- b) The difference between the market value for the land and the actual price paid for the disposal (if any) is not more than £2m (also providing that the reduction in price does not breach State Aid Rules)

4.10 Acquisitions

Land and property asset interests will only be considered for acquisition if the following circumstances apply:

- The acquisition makes a positive contribution to the delivery of Council services.
- The acquisition will make appositive contribution to reducing occupational cost
- All other methods for the delivery of the service have been investigated and an option appraisal has been undertaken which highlights acquisition as the most economic and efficient means of service delivery.
- The acquisition of the interest has potential for future strategic regeneration and/or redevelopment, or contributes to wider corporate objectives and appropriate funding has been identified.

4.11 Working with Public Sector Partner Organisations

The County Council will pursue opportunities for more efficient and effective collective use of the wider public sector estate through locality reviews and the Oxfordshire Collaborative Asset Management Group.

The Council supports the principles of CIPFA's ONE Public Estate and place-based asset management and will adopt such an approach across Oxfordshire.

The Council will pursue more informal, and less resource intensive property occupation arrangements with partners (licence agreements, Memorandums of Understanding, £/desk occupation charges). The Council will share property asset information with partners to enable strategic asset management of the public estate

4.12 Development and Regeneration

In certain cases the Council will hold land and property assets, sometimes for long periods, in anticipation of some wider benefit to be secured through a development or a wider regeneration proposal.

Where appropriate, the Council will use its surplus land and property assets to contribute towards corporate objectives for regeneration in the County and where opportunities arise

The Council will pursue public/private property initiatives, including Local Asset Backed Vehicles, where there is a robust business case for doing so and where the scheme will contribute significantly to corporate objectives for regeneration in a particular locality

4.13 Community Asset Transfer

The Council is committed to localism and recognises the importance of providing support to voluntary organisations that provide services to the community which are compatible with the Council's wider objectives

The Council will consider the disposal of land and property assets in accordance with the Community Right to Bid provisions of the Localism Act whereby community groups will be given the opportunity to develop a proposal and raise capital to bid for an "asset of community interest" when it comes to the open market

In addition to the Community Right to Bid, community interest in the transfer of property assets will be considered and assets made available for transfer unless one of the following principles applies:

- a) Property revenue savings or capital receipts from the property are needed to contribute to Council savings or to ensure the continued provision of front line Council services;
- b) There is another Council, partner co-location or school need for the property which would be difficult to meet in any other way;

- c) Grant conditions for capital expenditure on the property prevent the asset being transferred or a change of use within a specified timescale.

Once it has been decided that an asset can be made available, the Council will transfer the asset to the community/voluntary organisation on terms to be agreed, if:

- a) There is no other local building from which the community/voluntary organisation could reasonably provide the same service;
- b) The proposal is financially viable and sustainable;
- c) The proposal represents good value, taking into account the expected community benefits; and
- d) The proposal as a whole, and in particular the loss of a potential capital receipt due to a discounted sale price, is affordable.

The County Council will consider proposals from community and or voluntary organisations for either leasing an asset or for purchasing a freehold interest. The Council's detailed policy on community asset transfer is contained in the Community Asset Transfer Policy.

4.14 Academy Transfers

The Council will transfer education land to Academies under 125 year leases at a peppercorn rent, consistent with the Academies Act 2010.

The Academies Act 2010 includes clear expectations that Academies should have a long leasehold interest unless the predecessor school held the freehold. A "two stage" conversion (Foundation and then Academy) could enable an Academy to obtain the freehold of the school site and is considered against the intentions of the Act. Therefore two stage conversions will be refused by the Council.

Where other Council services (e.g. Libraries, Children's Centres, Adult Learning, Hearing Impairment, Autism and other Special School services) form an integral part of the school, the Council's ability to continue to provide these services will be secured by taking a 125 year "lease-back" at a peppercorn rent (paying a fair proportion of utilities and maintenance costs).

4.15 Investment Portfolio

The Council will pursue opportunities for capital investment in surplus property to provide an income stream, subject to a robust business case.

The Council will consider strategic acquisition of investment property subject to the development of a robust business case.

The Council will be willing to hold a longer-term vision for use of capital funding in support of the above.

The Council will explore opportunities to generate additional income from its property portfolio of land and buildings, having regards to the community and neighbouring landowners, which will include:

- Telecoms and Wayleaves etc.
- Wind turbines/solar arrays/alternative energy sources
- Advertising

4.16 Energy Management

The Council will develop and implement an energy investment programme to meet its energy and carbon objectives.

In general, when making decisions about the management of its property, the Council will seek to minimise energy consumption, both in its buildings and in travel to and from the buildings.

The Council follows the principles of ISO50001 *Energy Management Systems* to define and implement its detailed energy policies and processes.

5 Property Requirements by Service

5.1 Library Service

The Council has a statutory duty to provide a comprehensive and efficient Library Service. There are currently 43 Libraries throughout the County together with 7 Mobile Libraries that service five mobile areas as well providing services to housebound residents.

The County Council's agreed strategy is to fully fund and resource all of the libraries that form part of our comprehensive and efficient library service. The core libraries are:

Abingdon, Banbury, Berinsfield, Bicester, Blackbird Leys, Botley, Carterton, Chipping Norton, Cowley, Didcot, Eynsham, Headington, Henley, Kidlington, Littlemore, Neithrop, Oxford Central, Summertown, Thame, Wallingford, Wantage and Witney.

The Council will also continue to provide a fully supported infrastructure (building, ICT, book stock and the installation of self-service) to those libraries which fall outside of our comprehensive and efficient library service. The Council will work with each of these libraries to establish a Friends Group to enable a shift in the balance of staffing in these libraries towards volunteers over a three-year period. For Community Plus libraries, this would mean one third volunteers and two thirds paid staff. These community plus libraries are:

Chinnor, Faringdon, Grove, Wheatley and Woodstock.

For Community Libraries this would mean one half volunteers and one half paid staff. These libraries are:

Adderbury, Bampton, Benson, Burford, Charlbury, Deddington, Goring, Hook Norton, Kennington, North Leigh, Old Marston, Sonning Common, Stonesfield, Watlington, Woodcote and Wychwood.

Where development and/or regeneration opportunities present themselves the County Council will look to secure appropriate contributions towards the provision of library services. In order to assist in this process, a review of the space standards for libraries will be undertaken during 2014/15. This will ensure the County Council has a robust basis for securing financial contributions.

In addition, during 2014/15 the County Council proposes to undertake a review of all of its library sites with a view to identify opportunities to make better use of existing space, in particular those opportunities that might offer the potential to co-locate services.

5.2 Fire and Rescue Service

The Fire & Rescue service within Oxfordshire is delivered as part of the Council's services however there has been a recent shift in funding from a standard formula allocation, based on population to funding based on capital bids. The service is bound by legal responsibilities relating to response times and generally the existing Fire Stations are considered to be in the right locations to serve the existing population centres. Response times outside of the population centres are more challenging given that Oxfordshire is one of the most Rural Counties in the country.

There is a current shift towards the Oxfordshire service operating as part of a joined up national organisation of Fire & Rescue services to better combat terrorism and other national threats.

The Fire & Rescue Service as part of their Community Risk Management Plan are looking positively towards co-location opportunities particularly with other blue light services and this fits into the Council's wider ambition to work more closely with other public sector organisations.

There is a specific need to address the Fire & Rescue Service's workforce development strategy in relation to the Council's Asset Management Plan and especially in relation to any new locations for Fire Stations. There is a need for retained Fire Stations to be located within five minutes of on-call Personnel.

Future population growth areas in Bicester, Whitney, Wantage/Grove and Carterton, where the Fire & Rescue Service provision is currently provided by the Bampton, Burford and Whitney Fire Stations, has implications for the service due to potential increased risk and response times.

There remains an aspiration to re-provide the fire station at Rewley Road in Oxford as this would release some, or all, of the site for redevelopment. There would also be the potential to co-locate a number of the functions it accommodates, perhaps as part of the Northern Gateway development. However a City Centre Station is still required due to Oxford being a cultural and tourism centre, although a smaller site would suffice as office uses could be relocated elsewhere.

The on-going provision of some Fire & Rescue training is currently being assessed to determine the most effective means of delivering this going forward.

The Fire & Rescue Service also has responsibility for the Council's Gypsy and Traveller Service which has a number of locations within the County. This service currently operates effectively and there are no major asset implications.

5.3 Environment and Economy

The Highways services within Oxfordshire are delivered by Skanska. The Highways contract allows for investment of £5m in highway depots sites, which will be funded through revenue savings. Skanska 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. The priorities for capital investment are:

- Office accommodation, including refurbishment of existing buildings at Drayton and replacement of temporary buildings at 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.

5.4 Children, Education and Families

Children's Homes

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.

The County Council is looking to increase the in-county provision as a means of improving the service available to support vulnerable children. Provision of such services locally will have the added benefit of being more cost effective.

Pupil Referral

The main Pupil Referral Unit is based at Meadow Brook School with other additional units located across the county. The service strategy continues to evolve and there remains a desire to explore potential co-location opportunities within localities.

Early Intervention

Seven Early Intervention Hubs, (EIH) operate across the county, supported by five Early Intervention Satellites (EIS). The EIHs provide a single, integrated early intervention service for children, young people and families with additional and complex needs: services are 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

Investment in the children's centre programme means that there 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.

Children's Social Care

This service is delivered predominately from Knights Court, Samuelson House, Foxcombe/Windrush Court, Nash Court and Kings Gate. Any increase in demand for this service will be considered as part of the office rationalisation proposals under the Strategic Asset Management Plan.

Outdoor Education

There are currently three out of county Outdoor Education Centres with one being located within Oxfordshire at Hill End. The Council owns the freehold of the out of county centres and alternative service delivery models are currently being explored, subject to a robust business case.

Adult Learning

Adult Learning has administrative functions concentrated into four area offices – Unipart House, Kidlington Adult Learning, Union Street (East Oxford) and Grove Adult Learning Centre.

Other premises continue to be required for service delivery. Co-location of Adult Learning accommodation with other Council and partner services continues to be pursued where appropriate.

5.5 Social and Community Services

Adult Social Care

Ninety percent of Adult Social Care Services are provided through contracts with external service providers. The service is moving from that of commissioner to an enabler given the funding changes that provide individual care budgets to service users. The focus of the service is to support users to remain independent in their own home. This focus is assisted by closer working arrangements with health professionals and the District Councils.

There is a desire to encourage more agile working within the provision of Adult Social Care through the use of smaller integrated bases with Health colleagues and more time being spent within communities.

Homes for Older People

Homes for Older People are all leased to the Oxfordshire Care Partnership. The County Council worked with OCP to deliver the re-providing of seven of the homes that were no longer fit for purpose, before undertaking a further piece of work to address the remaining eight homes.

Day Services

As part of the Day Opportunities Strategy traditional older people's day centres were 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

There are no property related issues identified for this service at present.

Special Needs Housing

The 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.

An overall housing strategy is currently being prepared which will set out the need and delivery strategies for all the areas of special needs housing, including older people, as well as learning disabilities, physical disabilities and mental health. Whilst the demographic drivers are not on the same scale as for older people and Extra Care Housing, there is often a need for more specific and specialist housing that 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 Extra Care Housing.

5.6 Coroners and Cultural Services

The Council's Cultural Service incorporates Museums, the Archive Service and other stand-alone cultural sites. The Council also has a statutory duty to collect and store documents as part of the archive service based at the Oxfordshire History Centre (St Luke's Records Office). This facility was recently converted but is now at capacity and as a result a potential future new alternative location might be explored in conjunction with a potential relocation of the current book store service at Holton.

The Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock is supported from the storage facility at the Standlake Museum Resource Centre which has recently been extended and now provides a sufficient principal storage facility.

5.7 Customer Services

This service is currently split between Unipart House and Clarendon House in Oxford. The need to vacate Clarendon House by June 2014 as part of the Asset Rationalisation Programme will result in the Customer Service Centre relocating to County Hall in spring 2014. The majority of ICT services located within Clarendon House will be relocated to Unipart House at the same time. ICT infrastructure will be moved to the Cloud in 2015/16 which will remove the requirement for a physical Data Centre. Academy Transfers are resulting in a move away from direct services to schools over three years to 2015. The remaining services are currently under review.

5.8 Public Health Services

This service transferred to the County Council with effect from 1st April 2013 and is effectively a commissioning service for preventative health services to the public within Oxfordshire. Members of staff located across County Hall and Oxford Health premises at Jubilee House. Opportunities for provision of services from Council property assets are kept under review as contractual arrangements are renewed.

5.9 Staff Housing

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.

6 Conclusion

This Asset Management Plan is a live document and will be reviewed annually in line with Service and Resource Planning and Capital Planning process.