

**OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY
8 DECEMBER 2015**

***PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT**

AGENDA ITEM No.

12

**TITLE OF REPORT : MID YEAR MONITORING REPORT ON KEY PROJECTS FOR
2015/16**

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE, PERFORMANCE AND ASSET MANAGEMENT
PORTFOLIO HOLDER: COUNCILLOR JULIAN CUNNINGHAM

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 This monitoring report provides an update on the delivery of the key projects for 15/16 identified to the Committee in March 2015

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That delivery against the key projects for 15/16 be noted and commented on by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 To enable achievements against the key projects for 2015/16 to be considered.

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 There are no alternative options as this is a monitoring report.




5. CONSULTATION WITH RELEVANT MEMBERS AND EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 No external consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of this report as it is a monitoring report. Members will, however, be aware that a report setting out the key projects was brought to this Committee on 17 March 2015.




6 FORWARD PLAN

- 6.1 This report does not contain a recommendation on a key decision and has not been referred to in the Forward Plan

7. BACKGROUND


- 7.1 This report provides details on the status of the key projects 15/16. It does not include any projects initiated after the document was agreed and is not a full report on all of the projects that the Council is undertaking.
- 7.2 This is the second year of the priorities that were agreed at the Council meeting on 5 September 2013.
- 7.3 This report summarises the status of each of the key projects. Overall, where the delivery has been solely down to the Council good progress has been made. The following symbols have been used to summarise progress.
- Project completed 
- Project not due for completion in 2015/16 or has not reached due date 
- Project behind original due date 


8. PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

- 8.1 The Council has committed to promote sustainable growth. This encompasses employment, housing, leisure and the infrastructure to support the growth and the Council needs to encourage an environment in which businesses and people can flourish. The following specific projects were identified in the Priorities for the District.
- 8.2 **Prepare Local Plan Submission. [Original due date – 31 July 2015]** Following the consultation period on the Preferred Options, 8,500 representations were received. These have been analysed throughout 2015/16 and have resulted in further work being required to underpin the evidence base for the submission draft of the Local Plan. A next steps report will be taken to Cabinet in December 2015 which will include a new timetable for production of the Local plan.. 
- 8.3 **Economic Development. [Original due date 31 March 2015]** The original action identified in 2014/15 concerned the provision of an economic development officer. Work has been undertaken to progressing on key areas of work to help scope the tasks and responsibilities that a potential economic development officer would undertake. This has resulted in an Economic Development Strategy and Action Plan being approved by Cabinet in September. A Job Description for the role can now be drafted and an appointment to the post made before the end of the financial year. 
- 8.4 **Disposal of surplus Council Land.** The sale of land at Lloyd Way Kimpton was completed to Croudace Homes and the area will be developed to provide new homes as well as generating a Capital sum to fund future projects. Negotiations are continuing on the Lumen Road site but these have been hampered by the level of contamination on the site. The site at Yeomanry Drive, Baldock, will be dealt with during 2016. 
- 8.5 **Regeneration of John Barker Place.** This project is being led by North Herts Homes. Once the new Community Centre has been completed and the existing one demolished, and the subsequent construction of the new multi use games area (MUGA), next to the new centre, (anticipated for the end of April 2016), work on the development of new affordable homes and shops will commence.


8.6 **WORKING WITH OUR COMMUNITIES**


The Council continues to work with local communities. The team of Community Development officers work with many groups and organisations across the District to promote community participation.


8.7 **Complete the fit out and open the North Hertfordshire Museum and Community Facility. [Original due date September 2015]** The building works are now completed with the exception of minor snagging. The fit out of the museum, café and kitchen is underway. Works on the galleries for the museum is almost completed and a number of the museum objects have been moved to the new facility. Council have received a report regarding the delays to the project. 


8.8 **Churchgate, Hitchin [Original due date:31 December 2015].** Work with Hammersmatch to develop a small scheme proposal for the Churchgate site has continued. Hammersmatch are to provide a solution to the market location, a financial appraisal and draft scheme by 31 December. 









8.9 **Westmill Community Centre.** This project is being led by North Hertfordshire Homes. Construction of the new Centre is now well underway and it is anticipated it will be completed early in 2016. The new MUGA will then be constructed and the old MUGA and Community Centre demolished.




8.10 **Delivery of identified projects in the Green Space Management Strategy and agreed capital programme. [Original due date 31 May 2016]** The refurbishment of the play area in Bush Springs, Baldock has been completed. Work is now underway for the provision of a water splash park in Bancroft Recreation Ground, Hitchin in accordance with the Master Plan. An interactive water splash park in Priory Memorial Garden, Royston is also under construction. It is anticipated that both facilities will be open for use in the summer of 2016. 

8.11 **Identify qualifying projects under the Rural Capital Funding and undertake capital works delivery programme (Ongoing)** Three more grant awards for projects were approved by the Parish Challenge Panel and endorsed by the Executive Member. The projects are at Gt. Wymondley Village Hall, Barley Town House and Cockenhoe Memorial Hall. A further two projects (at Breachwood Green Village Hall, and Kelshall Village Hall) were assessed by officers for grant funding from the scheme. Proposals were put to Members for approval. Works at both Cockernhoe and Kelshall have been completed. 

8.12 **Continue to promote Careline as a valuable resource in supporting independent living. [Original Due Date 31 March 2016]** Hertfordshire County Council appointed Careline to be the sole provider of community alarms across Hertfordshire from 1 April 2015. This was subsequently expanded to include the provision of basic telecare and discussions are ongoing as regards a further expansion into bespoke assistive technology. Work in taking on this increase in client base and ensuring clients are transferred smoothly from the existing providers has been undertaken in 2015 and will conclude by the end of March 2016. The Service will now be structured on a sustainable basis to ensure the provision of high quality services. Work is ongoing to expand the product range, increase retail sales, and the encouragement of referrals from all agencies such as the police and Clinical Commissioning Groups, etc. 

8.13 **Redevelopment and refurbishment at North Herts Leisure Centre [Original Due Date 31 August 2016]** Approval for the capital programme was obtained and planning permission has been granted. Clarification questions are currently being undertaken with contractors. 

- 8.14 **To work with East Herts Council to develop the new waste & recycling and street cleansing contracts commencing from May 18 [Original Due Date May 2018]** A report on the Strategic Outline case was taken to Cabinet in June 2015. Work on progressing with a Northern Transfer Station has led to a slight delay on the original plan but this site is crucial for future arrangements and the new contract. 
- 8.15 **Continue the development of the Crematorium business case and structural arrangements for future implementation. [Original due date 31 March 2017]** A final piece of consultancy advice is being obtained. 
- 8.16 **LIVING WITHIN OUR MEANS**
The Council aims to be to stand on its own with little or no government assistance and keep Council Tax as low as possible without impacting on frontline services. The Council will use all available resources such as people, knowledge, investments and land and buildings to fulfil this aim.
- 8.17 **Implement the outcomes from energy audits undertaken in 2013/14 to reduce energy consumption where these have a proven payback [Original Due Date 31 March 2014]** It was anticipated that solar panels would be installed at Burymead and Harkness Court in 2015/16. The government's change in tariffs has however made this unlikely to provide a worthwhile payback. Consideration is now being given to improving loft insulation and installing LED lights. Looking further ahead similar measures will be incorporated into the District Council Office refurbishment and explored for the Leisure Centres. 
- 8.18 **Open plan refurbishment of the Council Offices including 'green' initiatives where appropriate to ensure a more efficient use of electricity, water and gas.[Original Due Date 31 May 2016]** Planning permission has been granted for the exterior works. Limited refurbishment of Town Lodge and the Letchworth Museum building will be undertaken in January 2016 to enable decanting to these buildings. Linked to the main refurbishment project, a business case for a storage facility in Letchworth has been developed. This project will not be delivered by the original due date of 31 May 2016, and may suffer from further delays due to capacity issues. This will be raised in the Risk Management report to December Finance Audit and Risk Committee. 
- 8.19 **Dependent on agreement to the Business Case, to form a partnership arrangement for the delivery of Building Control services with 6 other Herts authorities. [Original Due Date 30 September 2014]** The financial model for the seven local authorities and with specific reference to North Hertfordshire is due to go before the Finance Audit & Risk Committee and Cabinet in December 2015. 
- 8.20 **Land & Buildings [Original due date 30 September 2015]**The East of England Local Government Association undertook a Locality Review of Letchworth and Royston to ensure we maximise the returns from our property assets. A workshop has been organised to review the outcome of those reviews. 
- 8.21 **Channel Migration [Original Due Date 31 March 2016]** The text message service to residents has been rolled out and a noise nuisance app. to enable noise nuisance to be recorded and sent to Environmental Health is now in use. 
- 8.22 **To determine projects arising from the in depth review of parking services [Original due date 31 March 2016]** Consideration is being given to the best way to organise parking services within the authority. 

- 8.23 **Value for money review of Electoral & Democratic Services [Original Due date 31 August 2014]** An initial report has been considered by Corporate Board. A restructure report for the service is to be considered. 
- 8.24 **Negotiation of Lease terms.[Original Due Date 31 March 2015]** Work has continued on reviewing and renewing the lease agreements for a number of Community Centres. Meetings have been held with both the Coombes and Walsworth Community Centres. 
- 8.25 **To complete a business case on the viability of implementing Bulk Mail Processing [Original Due Date 31 December 2015]** A business case has been presented to Corporate Board. The Board is now to review two options. 

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 There are no legal implications arising from this monitoring report. Legal implications for each project are considered at the relevant stages of the project.
- 9.2 Overview and Scrutiny's terms of reference include "to review performance against the Council's agreed priorities and scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or service areas

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 The actions identified were resourced through the corporate business planning process cycle for 2015/16 that was undertaken in 2014/15. A number of these projects formed part of the Council's capital programme for 2015/16
- 10.2 The Council continues to face difficult spending decisions in view of the reduction in government support in future years and that the availability of funding will impact on the projects that can be undertaken.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 As key projects for the Council, where relevant, each project has its own project risk log that is maintained by the Project Manager and reviewed by the Project Board. Some high value/cross cutting projects are considered as Top Risks for the Council and these will be monitored throughout 2015/16 by the Finance Audit and Risk Committee

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of its functions, give **due regard** to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
- 12.2 By reporting delivery against the key projects for 2015/16 this provides a means to monitor whether the council are meeting the stated outcomes of the district priorities, its targets or delivering accessible and appropriate services to the community to meet different people's needs. This assists the Council to fulfil a number of its obligations arising from the Public Sector Equality Duty.

13 SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

- 13.1 As the recommendations made in this report do not constitute a public service contract, the measurement of 'social value' as required by the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 need not be applied, although equalities implications and opportunities are identified in the relevant section at paragraphs 12.
- 13.2 Where the key projects referred to in this report relate to the award of a public service contract, 'social value' will be captured and reported in accordance with the Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012.

14 HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 There are no additional human resource implications arising from this monitoring report. The resources needed to deliver projects should be considered through the Corporate Business Planning process.

15. CONTACT OFFICERS

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16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Key actions recorded on Covalent, the Council's Performance & Risk software.