
2009 CAPITAL STRATEGY AND ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN

Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Stephen Harker, Resources Portfolio

Responsible Director – Paul Wildsmith, Director of Corporate Services

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider drafts of the 2009 Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan (AMP).

Summary

2. The draft Capital Strategy sets out the way in which the Council determines and manages the capital programme and how it links with the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed. The Draft AMP is intended to continue to provide the Council with a strategic approach to its use and management of its assets.

Recommendation

3. It is recommended that the drafts of the 2009 Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan appended to this report be approved.

Reasons

4. The recommendation is supported to provide the Council with a Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan on which capital and asset management decisions can be based.

**Paul Wildsmith
Director of Corporate Services**

Background Papers

Capital Strategy 2007
Asset Management Plan 2007
Use of Resources – Key Lines of Enquiry

Guy Metcalfe : Extension 2735

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no specific issues relating to Crime and Disorder which this report needs to address
Health and Well Being	There are no specific issues relating to Health and Well Being which this report needs to address
Sustainability	The Council's commitment to Sustainability is supported by the Capital Strategy and AMP
Diversity	The Council's commitment to Diversity is supported by the Capital Strategy and AMP
Wards Affected	All Wards are covered by the Capital Strategy and AMP
Groups Affected	There are a number of groups to which the Capital Strategy and AMP relate
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not represent a change to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is not a key decision
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The strategy is complimented by both documents
Efficiency	Use of resources is a key consideration within the Capital Strategy and AMP and through performance management and benchmarking with other Local Authorities and external organisations it is anticipated that further efficiencies in the use and management of the Council's assets can be identified and driven forward.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. A conscious decision has been taken to try and align both draft documents more closely with the budget setting process and hence the current timing of the 2009 Capital Strategy and AMP.
6. Both documents are considered essential to provide the Council with a strategic platform in the use and management of its assets and to continue to satisfy the requirements of the Audit Commission and the Use of Resources Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) assessment criteria.

Capital Strategy

7. The Draft Capital Strategy sets out the way in which the Council determines and manages the Capital Programme and the linkages with the new Sustainable Community Strategy, One Darlington: Perfectly Placed.

Asset Management Plan

8. As well as changing its style and format there is intended to be more emphasis in the draft AMP to the Council's strategic approach to asset management, evidenced for example through the Leading Edge Accommodation Review Project. Also, reference in the plan to the Corporate Premises Risk and Facilities Management files, the Capital Project Management Review Process and the Third Sector Strategy – are intended to evidence key areas involving the Council's use and management of its assets.
9. The AMP also emphasises the impact the economic downturn is having on the Council's assets, particularly our ability to dispose of surplus land and the consequences this is having, for example on the capital programme and the amount of funding available for maintaining the Council's property portfolio.
10. The introduction to the AMP signals a proposal to change the way Asset Management is reported in the future. The intention is to simplify the process and align the Council's asset management strategy with an asset management work programme (Action Plan) approved in advance through the work of the Asset Management Group. Thereafter, an annual Asset Management report would measure progress against the previous years programme. This proposed change is felt to be in line with latest guidance and should improve the annual Asset Management reporting process.
11. 2009 is seen as a transition year providing the opportunity to develop and evaluate the new format.

Outcome of Consultation

12. Resources Scrutiny Committee considered both documents at their meeting on 12th March 2009 and their positive comments and feedback have been incorporated into the drafts.