

Asset Management Plan Update

Report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

1. That the revised 2021/22 and original 2022/23 Asset Management Plan, as shown in Annexes 1 and 2 to the report, be approved.
2. That the Head of Finance and Revenues, after consultation with the Finance & Resources Portfolio holder and Head of Service responsible for any project, be authorised to amend the Asset Management Plan during the year, as discussed in paragraph 7.3.

Recommendation to Council

SUMMARY:

- The report provides an update on the approved 2021/22 Asset Management Plan (AMP) and recommends the projects to be included in the 2022/23 budget.
- It provides an update on the financing of AMP projects, including a forecast of the balance on the Asset Management Reserve at 31 March 2023.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The Council's Asset Management Strategy details the approach to identifying the assets it is responsible for maintaining and the methods used in prioritising necessary works to ensure assets remain operationally effective.
- 1.2 Since the approval of the strategy, the Council's approach has been to review annually its asset management requirement for the forthcoming financial year and report on that as a part of the budget setting process.
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the current year's progress; explains reasons for variations from the approved plan and proposes an Asset Management Plan (AMP) for 2022/23.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council's approach to Asset Management has developed with the experience gained since the approval of the Asset Management Strategy.
- 2.2 The Council is responsible for the ongoing maintenance and replacement of a wide range of operational assets with an estimated value of £107M. In order to make the AMP more manageable, it is split into three categories. The categories are:
 - Land and Buildings
 - Vehicles and Plant
 - IT infrastructure

- 2.3 Condition surveys are carried out on all land and buildings on a rolling five year cycle. The results of the surveys are used to allocate each building into a priority category for works to be undertaken. This, combined with a review of how long the Council expects to retain individual properties, informs the development of the land and buildings' element of the AMP.
- 2.4 All vehicles and plant are regularly serviced by the Council's internal vehicle workshop. The effectiveness of all vehicles is monitored as part of the servicing programme. Among other things, this includes identifying where vehicles' workloads are different to that expected which may alter the timing of their replacement and identifying vehicles with higher / lower than expected servicing costs. Service users also keep the number of vehicles / items of plant required to deliver services under regular review.
- 2.5 The IT Service has a register of all hardware and major software systems used by the Council with profiles of their expected useful lives. From this it is possible to plan when IT infrastructure will need to be replaced. For hardware this tends to be between once every three to five years whereas software packages tend to last longer.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 In order to deliver the key priorities identified in the Corporate Plan it is essential that the Council's underlying asset base is sufficiently maintained to be fit for purpose.
- 3.2 The Council has a significant land and property holding generating income that is a key part of the Council's revenue budget. Maintaining and improving this income stream will be a significant factor in the Council's financial strategy in the future and this has a clear link to the maintenance of the land and property assets themselves.

4 Consultations/Communications

- 4.1 Relevant Heads of Service have been consulted with regard to the investment required to maintain those assets for which they are responsible.

5 2021/22 AMP update

Land and Buildings

- 5.1 Expenditure to the end of October shows works to the value of £941,000 have been committed or completed against an original budget for the year of £2.389M.
- 5.2 There have been some changes to the budget requirement during the year as shown in Annex 1a:
- The cost of the stonework repairs to the Guildhall required an additional £27,000 and the boiler at London Road Sports Pavilion required an additional £28,000 over the original amounts estimated.

- Electrical works at Portway Depot with a budget of £20,000 have been removed and included within the budget for rewiring in 2022/23.
 - Replacement toilet flooring for Union House at £5,000 is no longer required as the condition is suitable for the life of the building and current tenant use.
 - The budget of £20,000 for a new screen and projector at The Lights is no longer required.
- 5.3 A number of projects totalling £263,000 have been put on hold. This includes projects at Beech Hurst totalling £223,000 which have been put on hold due to the agile working review, and projects at Crosfield Hall and The Lights due to the regeneration projects for Romsey and Andover.
- 5.4 A number of schemes have been delayed as a result of staff resources being directed to other priorities, and the budget is recommended to be carried forward. The total value of items to be carried forward is £199,000 and is shown in Annex 1a and cross referenced in Annex 2a.
- 5.5 Taking into account these adjustments, the AMP requirement for the year is now expected to be £499,000 less than originally estimated at £1.890M as shown in Annex 1a.
- 5.6 Maintenance and asset management linked to the Council's ownership of the Chantry Centre are not included in this report. Separate arrangements are in place for the centre to ensure tenants' service charges are accurately allocated.

Vehicles and Plant

- 5.7 The total requirement for 2021/22 was originally set at £1.499M against which actual spend and commitments at the end of October are £584,000.
- 5.8 There have been a few budget changes during the year. Five items marked with an asterisk (*) are no longer required, but two new items marked with a double asterisk (**) will be purchased instead. The balancing amount of £18,000 (marked with a triple asterisk (***) will remain in the budget until the end of the financial year to cover any additional costs that may arise when the remaining items are tendered.
- 5.9 A breakdown of the costs related to the 2021/22 AMP which remains at £1.499M is shown in Annex 1b.

IT Infrastructure

- 5.10 Completed and committed expenditure for the year to October is £64,000 against an original estimate of £631,000.
- 5.11 There have been a number of changes to the budget for 2021/22. One item, Asset Explorer, an asset management tool, has been added at a cost of £13,000. Five items are to be taken out, either because they are no longer required, or because they are being deferred beyond 2022/23.

5.12 Five projects totalling £70,000 are requested to be carried forward until 2022/23.

5.13 Taking into account these changes, the requirement for 2021/22 is now estimated to be £361,000 and is shown in Annex 1c.

6 2022/23 AMP programme

Land and Buildings

6.1 The land and buildings' element of the AMP is managed across two Services; Property & Asset Management and Community & Leisure.

6.2 The recommended budget for works in 2022/23 is £1.451M (including £199,000 brought forward from 2021/22) and is recommended to be fully funded.

6.3 It is recommended that the works for the Playgrounds at a total cost of £316,000 be funded from the New Homes Bonus as these are projects that will benefit the community.

6.4 A summary of the items included in the AMP for 2022/23 is shown in Annex 2a.

Vehicles and Plant

6.5 The recommended budget for the replacement of vehicles and plant in 2022/23 is £788,000.

6.6 A summary of the items included in the AMP for 2022/23 is shown in Annex 2b.

IT Infrastructure

6.7 The IT AMP requirement for 2022/23 is £449,000 including the items brought forward from 2021/22. A breakdown of the costs is shown in Annex 2c.

6.8 In addition, a new telephony system is identified as a known project, but at this stage, there is no budget allocated against it. This will be reviewed and investigated during 2022/23 and a separate report brought forward in due course.

7 Options

7.1 There are many possible ways of prioritising the individual assets that require maintenance and the extent to which work is carried out.

7.2 The amounts included in the annexes and recommended for inclusion in the AMP are based on the professional advice of officers from the Services concerned in the operation and management of the Council's assets.

- 7.3 If, during the year, it becomes apparent that items need to be added to the AMP as a result of unexpected deterioration of an asset or for operational expediency it is recommended that the Head of Finance and Revenues, after consultation with the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder and the Head of Service responsible for the item, be authorised to procure such works as are necessary from the AMP reserve (see paragraph 9.4) to the extent that the reserve has funds available. It may also be the case that there are good reasons for approved projects to be temporarily deferred and Heads of Service should also have the capacity to postpone items where they consider it appropriate. Any such approvals will be agreed with the Finance & Resources Portfolio Holder and reported to Cabinet as part of the following AMP update.

8 Risk Management

- 8.1 A risk assessment has been completed in accordance with the Council's Risk management process and has identified the following significant (Red or Amber) residual risks that cannot be fully minimised by existing or planned controls or additional procedures.
- 8.2 There is a risk that the projects included in the AMP will not be delivered as scheduled leading to assets falling into disrepair. This will be monitored by regular progress reviews of the AMP by responsible officers and update reports to Cabinet.
- 8.3 There is a risk that there will be insufficient funds available to meet AMP requirements. The current level of the AMP reserve is just sufficient to fund the programme included in this report; however, there continues to be the need to seek sustainable funding for the AMP.
- 8.4 There is a risk of claims resulting from loss or injury caused by / contributed to as a result of poorly maintained Council owned property. This will be monitored by regular progress reviews of the AMP by responsible officers and update reports to Cabinet.

9 Resource Implications

- 9.1 The projected costs of the AMP in 2021/22 and 2022/23 are discussed in sections five and six above and are shown in more detail in annexes 1 and 2. These costs will be met in the majority from a specific reserve created to fund asset management costs.

Financing the AMP

- 9.2 It is not practical to build a base budget for AMP costs against individual services due to the highly changeable requirement from year to year. The Council's approach to funding the AMP is to hold an earmarked reserve that is allocated each year to budgets where expenditure is to be incurred.

9.3 The AMP is funded as follows:

- An annual contribution from the revenue budget. This contribution is currently £1.6M per annum. This includes a contribution of £100,000 for vehicle maintenance costs which is recommended to be transferred back into the Environmental Service revenue budget in 2022/23, thereby reducing the annual contribution to £1.5M.
- Where the Council has a revenue variance at the end of the year an element of this can be used to top-up the reserve. However, this option cannot be relied upon as a sustainable source of funding.
- An additional contribution to the AMP reserve might be recommended where there is additional pressure on the reserve. The contribution agreed for 2022/23 per the Medium Term Financial Strategy includes an additional £306,000.

9.4 At 31 March 2021 the Council's AMP reserve balance stood at £3.222M. The forecast movement in the reserve up to 31 March 2023 is shown in the table below.

	£'000
Asset Management Reserves at 31 March 2021	3,222
Transfer from revenue budget – 2021/22	1,600
Transfer from revenue budget – 2022/23	1,500
Additional contribution to reserve from revenue budget in respect of the financial management system upgrade	52
Additional transfer from revenue budget as per the Medium Term Financial Strategy – 2022/23	306
Contribution from New Homes Bonus re playgrounds	366
Plug-in grants re purchase of electric vehicles	10
Sale of vehicles replaced as part of 2021/22 AMP	38
Land and Buildings Requirement 2021/22 – Annex 1a	(1,890)
Vehicle and Plant Requirement 2021/22 – Annex 1b	(1,499)
IT Infrastructure Requirement 2021/22 – Annex 1c	(361)
Land and Buildings Requirement 2022/23 – Annex 2a	(1,451)
Vehicle and Plant Requirement 2022/23 – Annex 2b	(788)
IT Infrastructure Requirement 2022/23 – Annex 2c	(449)
Forecast Asset Management Reserves at 31 March 2023.	656

- 9.5 The proposed AMP items comprise both revenue and capital expenditure. Expenditure is classified as capital when the total cost is over £10,000 and it is for the purchase of a new asset, materially lengthens the useful life of an existing asset or adds value to the asset being modified. All other expenditure on the routine maintenance and repair of assets will be treated as revenue expenditure. Once approved, the costs of the AMP will be kept in the Asset Management Reserve and drawn down as and when required.

10 Legal Implications

- 10.1 Those tenants occupying Council owned properties for which the Council is responsible for maintenance could, in the event of their property falling into disrepair, take action against the Council as their landlord. This is covered in the risk assessment (paragraph 8.4).

11 Climate Change Implications

- 11.1 The Council has set up a number of Climate Change Work Streams in response to the Council Motion on 4 September 2019, "That the Council declares a 'Climate Emergency' and commits to investigating clear and effective options to become a carbon-neutral organisation."

Three of these Work Streams are relevant to the Asset Management Plan:

- a) Premises and Asset Management – to review the management of the Council's premises and assets to identify areas where we can reduce energy demand, improve energy efficiency and convert to renewable, low or zero carbon technologies for energy and heat needs;
 - b) Transport, Fleet and Plant – to bring forward measures to improve the fuel efficiency and move towards lower emission fuel sources;
 - c) Digital and smart working – to investigate how the Council can make best use of available technology and how this could help change the way the Council does business.
- 11.2 The Property & Asset Management Service do and will continue to explore all options when upgrading or replacing property assets. Part of this exploration will always include a review of alternative technologies and solutions.
- 11.3 A regular assessment of alternative technologies is always undertaken in relation to the procurement of replacement vehicles and plant. The Environmental Service has deployed a number of electric vans in recent years and will continue to do so where appropriate. Other technologies are emerging, particularly around grounds maintenance functions, where electrically powered plant and hand held equipment is gradually coming onto the market. For larger vehicles the alternative technology available is a mixed and evolving picture. For waste collection vehicles there is now the option to consider the deployment of electrically powered alternatives onto the fleet but the cost of doing so is currently prohibitive with the electric version costing more than twice that of a traditionally diesel powered version. The situation will be kept under continual review where it is anticipated that prices will reduce over time and it is important to note that all new vehicles meet the required low emissions standards at the time of purchase.

12 Equality Issues

- 12.1 An EQIA screening has been completed in accordance with the Council's EQIA methodology and no potential for unlawful discrimination or negative impact has been identified, therefore a full EQIA has not been carried out.

13 Other Issues

- 13.1 There are no other issues.

14 Conclusion and reasons for recommendation

- 14.1 All Council land, vehicle and IT assets have been reviewed to ensure that those included on the draft programme are the most appropriate at this time.
- 14.2 For this reason it is recommended that the items shown in Annex 1 are included in the revised AMP for 2021/22 and the items shown in Annex 2 are included in the AMP for 2022/23.
- 14.3 Asset management needs to have flexibility due to the difficulty of knowing exactly when an item will need repair or replacement. In order to ensure that operational efficiency is not impaired it is recommended that controlled safeguards are built in to the financing of the AMP to ensure that unforeseen works can be undertaken without undue delay.

<u>Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)</u>			
None			
<u>Confidentiality</u>			
It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.			
No of Annexes:	2	File Ref:	N/A
(Portfolio: Finance and Resources) Councillor M Flood			
Officer:	Jenni Carter	Ext:	8236
Report to:	Cabinet	Date:	8 December 2021