

APPENDIX A

Meeting: Executive
Date: 13th July 2010
Subject: **ASSET DISPOSAL STRATEGY**
Report of: **Councillor Steve Male, Portfolio Holder for Customers and Systems and Assets**
Summary: The report presents the Asset Disposal Strategy for Central Bedfordshire Council for the period 2010/11 and the Council's approach to the management of its assets for consideration by the Executive.

Advising Officer: Richard Ellis, Director of Customer and Shared Services
Contact Officer: Peter Burt, Head of Assets
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Executive
Key Decision Yes
**Reason for urgency/
exemption from call-in
(if appropriate)** N/A

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The Corporate Asset Disposal Strategy sets out the Council's strategy for the disposal of property assets and shows how it will use its assets to meet strategic priorities and provide capital to support budgets. It is also part of the Council's CAA considerations.

Financial:

The Council's financial plans support the delivery of the strategic plans for asset disposals, transfers and rationalisation or by more efficient asset use.

Legal:

None within the Disposal Strategy but the conveyancing team will be involved in implementing agreed heads of terms for sale.

Risk Management:

None within the Asset Disposal Strategy but each property will be assessed for risks during analyses for disposal.

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

None

Equalities/Human Rights:

Under the terms of equality legislation, when developing proposals and making policy decisions public authorities must ensure that decisions are made in such a way as to minimise unfairness, and they do not have a disproportionately negative effect on people from different ethnic groups, disabled people and men and women.

The Strategy is written to obtain consistency to ensure there are no disproportionate negative effects.

Community Safety:

The Strategy considers all aspects of community and 3rd sector use of assets and the safety of all our properties is paramount.

Sustainability:

One of the key aspects of the Strategy is to facilitate the management of the property portfolio to deliver sustainable development.

Summary of Overview and Scrutiny Comments:

- The Asset Disposal Strategy is being considered by Overview and Scrutiny on 21 June 2010.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the Executive Committee adopt the Asset Disposal Strategy as its approach to this part of the management of its assets.**

Reason for Recommendation: The Asset Disposal Strategy sets out the principles which provide the platform from which the Council's disposal policy will be developed and is an intrinsic element of the capital budgets.

Executive Summary

1. The delivery of the Asset Disposal Strategy will assist Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) with its extensive reform and public service delivery agenda over the next few years. It outlines the management of the strategy and the role that senior officers and the property team need to play in its delivery and implementation.

2. Property assets play a key role in supporting and enabling the delivery of improved public services. The Asset Disposal Strategy supports the capital budget and CBC in setting the foundation for making the most efficient, effective and economic use of its property resources.
3. The report attached is better described as a 'property best practice protocol'. It sets out the principles against which the Council will go about disposing of its assets.
4. The protocol is an important building block of a property strategy. It is also pertinent relative to issues which may lead to Ombudsman complaints, Freedom of Information and media requests. The ethical approach described in the report will also give confidence to either public or private sector potential development partners.
5. The Executive agreed an Asset Management Plan for the period 2009/10 at its February 2010 meeting, which included a gap analysis of work to be undertaken to form a baseline from which a comprehensive Corporate Property Strategy can be developed. Workstreams now need to be set up and resourced to progress the gap analysis work. An initial draft strategy should be complete before the end of the financial year and is likely to include the need for:
 - Strategic overview of needs, rationalisation and disposal
 - Contemporary, transparent property data, properly resourced
 - Corporate oversight of Property Performance
 - Enabling the Council's educational, economic and social agendas
6. During 2011/12 the initial work will be further developed by consulting and challenging Directorate colleagues on utilisation, fitness for purpose and the extent to which assets are being sweated. By this time we will also be able to realistically consult and meaningfully negotiate with public sector colleagues on shared use of assets and joint service development.
7. Further corporate work is needed to better define and adopt criteria as to how the Council can demonstrate its 'wellbeing' role by, at times, and in appropriate circumstances, offering our land and buildings for disposal at undervalues. The Council has a very significant regeneration and economic development policy priority including social and affordable housing which its property assets can play a significant enabling role in delivering. This has to be balanced against capital investment needs of the Council, which more and more for the medium term are likely to be funded by disposals from the portfolio.

Appendices:

Appendix A – Asset Disposal Strategy