

Meeting of the Council – 2nd December, 2013

Report of the Cabinet

Capital Programme Monitoring

Purpose of Report

1. To report progress with implementation of the Capital Programme.
2. To propose amendments to the Capital Programme.

Background

3. At its meeting held on 30th October, 2013, the Cabinet made recommendations to the Council concerning the capital programme, as contained in this report. Under the powers delegated to it, the Cabinet also noted the results of two post completion review projects, as appended to the report submitted to the Cabinet meeting.
4. In accordance with the requirements of the Council's Financial Regulations, details of progress with the 2013/14 Programme are given in Appendix A. It is proposed that the current position be noted and that budgets be amended to reflect the reported variances.

Urgent Amendment to the Capital Programme

Internal remedial works to offices at Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge

5. The Transforming Our Workplace project approved by the Cabinet includes the disposal of 12 surplus offices sites in Dudley Town Centre and the refurbishment of core offices to be retained.

When the Directorate of the Urban Environment co-located to 4 Ednam Road, three offices were vacated, including that at Mary Stevens Park (MSP). Retention of the office was necessary so that the Directorate of Children's Services could occupy the site. This would provide Children's Services with the opportunity to establish a strategic hub in the south of the borough to support the most vulnerable children and families in this area. As a result Children's Services would be able to vacate a further 2 leased properties plus freehold sites at Halesowen District Office and Church Street Education Centre in Pensnett providing additional savings and capital receipts to the Council.

In order to accommodate the most vulnerable children and families, essential improvement works are required to the ground floor of the building. These include upgrading the existing reception and providing adjoining family rooms and associated amenities to accommodate vulnerable clients. As MSP will become a core Council office managed centrally, only essential works are being carried out to the same quality standard and cost controls applied to the wider project. This will include a modest amount of work to create new kitchen/break out areas for staff which can also be used for agile working by staff when working in the Stourbridge area.

The total cost of the work proposed is £121,000, which can be funded from a £50,000 allocation from the existing Transforming Our Workplace project and a £25,000 contribution from the Directorate of Children's Services capital programme (unallocated unringfenced 14-19/SEN capital grant), with the balance of £46,000 being met from anticipated future disposal proceeds resulting from the ongoing rationalisation of the Council's assets.

In order to accommodate additional staff moves within the existing programme and avoid knock on slippage, the proposed work at MSP has to commence as soon as possible, ideally starting in November 2013. To facilitate this, a decision (ref. DCR/35/2013) was made by the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Treasurer on 30th September 2013 to authorise internal remedial works to the Council offices at Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge as part of the Transforming Our Workplace project and include the works in the Capital Programme.

Finance

6. This report is financial in nature and information about the individual proposals is contained within the body of the report.

Law

7. The Council's budgeting process is governed by the Local Government Act 1972, the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, the Local Government Finance Act 1988, the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, and the Local Government Act 2003.

Equality Impact

8. These proposals comply with the Council's policy on Equality and Diversity.
9. With regard to Children and Young People:
 - The Capital Programme for Children's Services will be spent wholly on improving services for children and young people. Other elements of the Capital Programme will also have a significant impact on this group.
 - Consultation is undertaken with children and young people, if appropriate, when developing individual capital projects within the Programme.
 - There has been no direct involvement of children and young people in developing the proposals in this report.

10. On consideration of the above, the Cabinet, at its meeting held on 30th October, 2013 resolved to recommend the Council that the proposals set out in paragraphs 11 and 12 below be approved.

Recommendations

11. That current progress with the 2013/14 Capital Programme as set out in Appendix A to this report be noted and that budgets be amended to reflect the reported variances.
12. That the Urgent Amendment to the Capital Programme, as set out in paragraph 5, be noted.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'W. J. ...', written over a dotted line.

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Leader of the Council

2013/14 Capital Programme Progress to Date

Service	Budget £'000	Spend to 30 th September £'000	Forecast £'000	Variance £'000	Comments
Public Sector Housing	39,878	12480	39,878	-	
Other Adult, Community & Housing	9,001	3814	8,989	-12	See Note 1
Urban Environment	31,462	10398	31,462	-	
Children's Services	15,302	2777	15,302	-	
Corporate Resources	2,260	842	2,260	-	
TOTAL	97,903	30,311	97,891	-	

Note 1: Minor underspend on completion of refurbishment of the Unicorn Centre (formerly Amblecote SEC).