

Cabinet Report

Report of Head of Finance

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TO: COUNCIL 16 February 2022

Capital strategy 2022/23 to 2031/32

Recommendation

- 1) That cabinet recommends council to approve the capital strategy 2022/23 to 2031/32 which is contained in appendix one of the report of the head of finance to cabinet
- 2) That cabinet recommends to council to agree the strategy for flexible use of capital receipts which is contained as annex 1 of the capital strategy.

Purpose of Report

1. To request cabinet to recommend council to approve the capital strategy for 2022/23 to 2031/32. The capital strategy outlines the council's approach to capital spending, based on the council's corporate strategy, and is linked to the council's corporate objectives, medium term financial strategy, and management of projects and programmes.

Strategic Objectives

2. The allocation of financial resources within capital budgets needs to match the objectives agreed by the council.

Background

3. The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code requires local authorities to produce a capital strategy to demonstrate that capital expenditure and investment decisions are taken in line with service objectives and take account of stewardship, value for money, prudence, sustainability and affordability. Under the Code, a capital strategy is required to be agreed ahead of the 2020/21 financial year and will be reviewed on an annual basis.

4. The capital strategy for 2022/23 to 2031/32 is attached as appendix one to this report. The strategy provides the overall policy framework for capital expenditure and investment. It does this by bringing together the requirements of the council's strategic objectives, and the constraints of its medium term financial plan, and within the parameters set by those it determines how capital schemes can be progressed from initial idea through to conclusion.
5. A key change to the strategy proposed to be adopted is to broaden the areas where capital investment will be considered to include the following broad categories:
 - Property investments – maximising the use and value of council owned assets to support council services, or for regeneration purposes to deliver a wider social, or community benefit.
 - Loans – to companies and other organisations to support the delivery of the council's corporate objectives.
 - Renewable energy schemes – to support delivery of the council's climate action priorities.

In all cases investment will need to be within the council's legal powers, be proportionate to the council's financial standing, and primarily in support of council objectives and not commercial gain.

6. As previously, the strategy includes within it a strategy for the flexible use of capital receipts. This identifies revenue activity which, under guidance issued by the Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, is eligible to be funded using capital receipts rather than revenue resources.
7. The capital strategy is a key document for the council. It provides a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services. It also provides an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability. It will increase transparency in the planning, approval and monitoring of capital expenditure.

Climate and Ecological Impact Implications

8. There are no direct implications arising from implementing the strategy. As part of the asset management and ongoing review process for the council's property asset portfolio, measures will be introduced to enhance building sustainability, reduce water consumption and waste and improve energy efficiency in new developments and refurbishment projects in line with the council's adopted Climate Action Plan.

Financial Implications

9. There are no direct financial implications arising from implementing the strategy.

Legal Implications

10. None.

Conclusion

11. This report provides details of the proposed capital strategy for 2022/23 to 2031/32 and asks cabinet to recommend the capital strategy to council. These documents provide the parameters within which capital expenditure and investment decisions will be made once the supporting requirements are in place.

Background Papers

The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities.

Appendices

Appendix one Capital strategy 2022/23 to 2031/32.