

CABINET PORTFOLIO SUMMARY REPORT

REPORT OF	Councillor Adrian Jones
CABINET PORTFOLIO FOR	Central and Support Services
CO-ORDINATING CHIEF OFFICER	Joe Blott, Strategic Director- Transformation and Resources

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is an update from the Cabinet Portfolio Holder to Members of the Council on matters relevant to his portfolio.

1. ASSET MANAGEMENT

The summary of the major disposals is as follows:

- Acre Lane - The exclusivity period for Morris Homes, the preferred developer, to undertake surveys and present their final offer commenced on 16 November 2015. Their final offer is imminent.
- Manor Drive - Bids have been received for this site, with David Wilson Homes being the preferred developer. Heads of terms are being drawn up to enter an exclusivity period for site investigations to be carried out and a final offer is anticipated very soon.
- Former school sites - Secretary of State submissions have been made for three former school sites: Foxfield School in Moreton; Pensby Park Primary; and Rock Ferry High. Further financial information is required and this is work in progress.
- Former MOD site in Old Hall Road, Bromborough - Members have approved the sale of this site in Old Hall Road, Bromborough, to SamWa (UK) Investment Group. It is proposed to develop an International Trade Centre on the twenty-acre site. Heads of Term are presently being negotiated.
- Hoylake Golf Resort – If this project proceeds the Council will contribute a large proportion of the land holding required by way of a Development Agreement, and new Municipal Course will be created.
- Concerto – An Asset Management System has been activated for school asset data. The “go-live” date for the helpdesk is on track for 30 November 2016. Training and system testing is going well. This is particularly important for future Service Level Agreements with schools - which bring in a significant income of £400,000 p.a. The next phase of the system is now being worked on for implementation.
- Wirral Partnership Asset Group - Local Government Association; support has been secured to assist Asset Management with key office and area reviews and also to establish a wider Wirral Partnership asset group. This exercise will help deliver savings and target service delivery in line with the Pledge Promises.
- Edsential and Wirral Evolutions - Leases have been completed, permitting the re-designated use of premises for these new businesses.

- Bedford Drive Primary School - The new school is planned to open in September 2016. The schools Capital Programme is progressing well and will be hastened by the appointment of framework architectural and other technical services to support officers in delivering larger projects, particularly in meeting additional pupil places.

2. HEALTH, SAFETY & RESILIENCE

Health & Safety

The Health, Safety & Resilience team have undergone a recent restructure and are now part of a larger Corporate & Community Safety Team. This has joined up the Community Patrol Service, the Wirral Anti-Social Behaviour Team along with the existing Health, Safety & Resilience Team.

The major projects that the team has been dealing with recently relate to budget savings options and 2 of the 2020 pledges:

- Ensuring Wirral's Neighbourhoods are Safe; and
- Zero Tolerance to Domestic Abuse

In regards to budget savings options there is one area which sits in Cllr Adrian Jones' portfolio and that is the Occupational Health Service. As a result of a change in service delivery model and a switch to an on-line digital booking system through Self-Serve for all Occupational Health appointments, we will no longer need a Receptionist at the clinic. Therefore the Occupational Health receptionist post is being deleted making the employee redundant.

We continue to provide an excellent health & safety and occupational health service to the majority of our schools and more recently to Wirral Evolutions. These SLA's deliver income to the tune of £160,000 into the Council and the excellent customer satisfaction levels are reflected in a 'buy back' rate of 94% (H&S) and 80% (Occupational Health) respectively.

Flooding

As a result of an extreme weather event last September, over 100 properties experienced internal flooding. These properties were primarily but not all in the Moreton area. Due to the large number of properties affected, a Section 19 (New Floods & Water Management Act) Serious Flooding Incident Investigation was legislatively required and AECOM were commissioned to undertake this piece of work. They are scheduled to provide their findings report at the end of March.

We continue to monitor all weather alerts and cascade information on the various Met Office, Environmental Agency and DoH weather alerts systems to a range of partner and community representatives to ensure they can plan for service delivery accordingly.

External Threats

The current threat level in regards to International Terrorism is SEVERE. Whilst this threat level is described as an attack is highly likely, there is no local intelligence indicating that Merseyside is at imminent threat.

Extreme weather continues to be an increasingly important threat, and the storms which recently affected Scotland and the North of England, demonstrate that these types of events are far more likely than any terrorist related incident.

3. IT

The council is making great progress in reducing its data centre risk. We are in advanced discussions with a public sector partner to share a site with them. The IT Service continues to work with Asset Management to identify a suitable location for the second data centre to enhance the resilience of the ICT Estate in 2016/17.

The IT Service is:

- Working with the Council's Telecommunications Partner (BT) to improve the performance and resilience of the Council's Wide Area Network. This improvement programme is expected to run for most of this calendar year (2016);
- Replacing the Council's IT service management and monitoring tools. The new tools will provide extended user self-service facilities which will improve the service delivered to all users and will also improve the management of PCs and laptops, mobile phones, systems performance, incident and problem management and systems security;
- Working with colleagues across the Council and elected Members to develop a specification for a new CRM system which will be procured and implemented in 2016/17;
- Is upgrading all of the Microsoft Windows Servers used by the Council (approximately 600), as part of the reinvestment in IT to improve systems, in advance of support ceasing in July 2016.

4. TRANSACTION CENTRE

The Transaction Centre was created in May 2015 with a view to streamlining the many processes across the Council for our residents. By drawing these systems together, we have improved our:-

- NNDR collection rate and we are on target to exceed our year-end forecast
- Improved our council-tax recovery rates, dealing with queries more speedily and accurately
- Improved our DHP assessments so they are dealt with as received
- Improved our performance regarding payment of invoices within 30 days. In November it was 87.33%, December was 94.96% and January 2016 is 92.11% against a target of 90%

We were also particularly pleased that we brought in an additional £725,000 to local people via a simple approach Free School Meals / Pupil Premium, something which has attracted national interest.