

DRAFT CAPITAL STRATEGY 2019-21

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Section 1 – Principles of the Draft Capital Strategy

1. Introduction

1) Introduction

In December 2017, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy issued a revised Prudential and Treasury Management Code, requiring all local authorities to produce a Capital Strategy report from 2019-20 onwards to show

- a high-level long term overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of services
- an overview of how the associated risk is managed
- the implications for future financial sustainability

This capital strategy meets the requirement by setting out the Council's capital investment programme and how it contributes to the achievement of strategic priorities as detailed in the Harrow Action Plan, while considering resource availability and the wider financial context. It is intended to be supportive of the Council's other strategy framework documents.

2. Objectives

The main objectives of the capital strategy, as per the Council's Financial Regulations, are as follows:

The following document sets out how the Council sets out its priorities for Capital investment including links to existing delivery plans and strategy documents. It also considers the ways in which capital expenditure may be financed, including the impact that the Strategy has on the budgets of both the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). The strategy will also set out the links with Treasury Management objectives and determine the authority's approach to risk in those objectives.

This document is a fundamental part of the Council's business planning process from both a financial and service perspective. It sets out a framework whereby the authority's capital resources can be effectively allocated to those projects which may help the Council achieve wider corporate objectives, protect existing assets and support financial sustainability.

Principles of the Capital Strategy

1. Capital Investment is a vital tool in delivering strategic priorities.
2. The capital programme will include only those schemes which assist in delivering a Council priority or commercial returns
3. The Council will consider schemes purely to generate a commercial return, as part of the budget strategy to close the gap between expenditure and resources.
4. The evaluation of capital schemes for inclusion on the programme will follow an agreed process which allows scrutiny whilst not limiting innovation and adaptability
5. The funding of the capital programme must be considered alongside the revenue budget and balance sheet position as part of the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)
6. Capital projects will be monitored and reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis.

3. Background

As part of its wider treasury management objectives the Council must have regard to the "Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities" (henceforth to be referred to as the Prudential Code), as produced by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance & Accountancy (CIPFA). The 2018 revision of the Prudential Code introduces the requirement for authorities to produce a Capital Strategy. This document is the first version of such a strategy for Harrow and sets out baseline practices. As the capital ambitions of the authority continue to grow the Strategy will serve as a basis for building that capital programme and can be updated as and when new priorities, schemes or methods of financing are introduced. It is a live document underpinning the Council's capital programme

4. Capital Expenditure

Capital Expenditure is that which is incurred on the acquisition, creation or enhancement of an asset. These assets can be tangible such as buildings or vehicles, as well as intangible such as software products

5. The link between Revenue and Capital

Capital and revenue expenditure are separate components of local authority budgets and funding for each is considered separately. However, a vital component of successful financial planning is that revenue and capital budgets are intrinsically linked as the impact of capital expenditure must be reflected in revenue budgets. Therefore this capital strategy should be deemed to form a key part of the authority's medium term financial planning process.

The impact and affordability of capital expenditure must be considered in the assessment of capital projects at the business case stage. Effective financial planning must fully reflect the impact of capital plans in the revenue budget.

The following table sets out some of the key impacts of capital expenditure upon the revenue budget.

<p>Revenue Savings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Direct Income from assets •Reduced maintenance costs of new or improved assets •Savings in labour costs <p>Revenue Costs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Running costs of new assets •Minimum Revenue Provision (loan principal) •Interest costs from borrowing
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As an indication of the current cost of the existing capital programme, table below shows the capital financing costs that are already factored into the existing MTFS for 2018/19 to 2021/22 in relation to the existing and historic capital programmes:

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22
General Fund	£000	£000	£000	£000
MRP	16,556	22,379	21,932	24,821
Interest	8,045	10,093	11,676	13,108
GF Total	24,601	32,477	33,608	37,929

6. The Purpose of Capital Investment

Investment through Capital Expenditure may serve a number of purposes; these can typically be classified as being related to service priorities and commercial investments.

The Council has identified five service priorities as part of the Harrow Ambition Plan. The Harrow Ambition Plan is being refreshed and will be brought to Cabinet in February 2019. Capital expenditure may be a specific component of the corporate priority itself, such as the delivery of new affordable housing or investment in an asset which helps to achieve the priority,

Commercial investments are those which are entered into with the explicit objectives of returning a surplus for Council and therefore improving the financial sustainability of the Council. These may include:

- Acquisition of Property to deliver a commercial return, usually through rental
- Investments in outside organisations with the view to making a return
- Investments which neither deliver a financial return nor achieve a service objective for the Council should not be considered for inclusion on the Capital Programme.

7. What are our Council priorities?

Council priorities are set out in the Harrow Ambition Plan (2019)

- Building a Better Harrow
- Supporting those most in Need
- Protecting Vital Public Services
- Delivering a Strong local Economy for All
- Modernising Harrow Council

The existing full plan can be found at http://www.harrow.gov.uk/info/100004/council_and_democracy/1789/harrow_s_ambition_plan/2

8. Existing Capital Priorities

Service directorates were invited to bid for capital resources, as part of their service proposals for 2019/20 to 2021/22. The proposals which have been put forward take into account the council's strategic vision of "Working together to make a difference for Harrow", the Council's priorities and equalities or other statutory duties such as health and safety.

In view of the current financial climate and reduced external funding service directorates were asked to limit new capital proposals to the following categories:

- a. Life and Limb/Health and Safety.
- b. Statutory Requirement/legislation.
- c. Schemes fully funded by external sources.
- d. Invest to Save Schemes (the capital expenditure must generate a revenue stream to cover the capital financing costs and make a net contribution to the MTFS).

New proposals as well as the existing Capital programme for 2019/20 and 2020/21, are being reviewed in preparation for the final Capital Programme being taken to Cabinet in February. The following principles are underpinning the review:

- Is this capital needed to meet a statutory obligation? Also, is the amount requested the minimum requirement?
- Is this capital required to operate safely? Also, is the amount requested the minimum requirement?

- Does the capital investment make a net financial contribution to Harrow after accounting for all revenue costs (capital financing costs, implementation costs and any ongoing running costs)?
- Does the capital investment generate additional external funding?
- Is this capital requirement essential to sustain the organisation? Also, is the amount requested the minimum requirement?
- Where a project has already started, can existing contractual arrangements be re-negotiated?

9. Use of Commercial Investment

The Council took its Investment Property Strategy to Council in December 2015. The strategy allowed the acquisition of an investment property portfolio at a total cost not to exceed £20m with no single purchase to exceed £5m. Under this strategy the Council have acquired 4 commercial investments at a cost of £17m and a £700k net income contribution is included in the budget.

The income target from the commercial portfolio makes up less than 5% of the Council's revenue budgets and therefore the risk can be considered to be minimal at this

10. Asset Management

Asset Management is the process by which the authority considers whether its assets are appropriate to deliver the high quality services demanded by residents. This process may identify a number of different outcomes for assets including;

- Change in use to meet the demands of a service
- Investment is required to improve the condition of an asset
- A new asset is required to better meet the Council priorities
- The need to dispose of the asset to realise its value in monetary terms

The Council will use active asset management to consider both its current asset base and its future asset base. The capital programme will be used to bridge the gap to ensure that the authority has sufficient assets in the long term.

The Council has an existing Corporate Asset Management Strategy which is being refreshed and due to be brought to Cabinet in due course.

11. Capital Disposals

The asset management process may determine that the value of an asset is best realised through disposal. Sale of assets should be through an open market process to determine the best value.

Cash received from a sale of a property is a capital receipt. The use of these funds is restricted to purchasing new assets or repayment of existing debt. The Council will not make

decisions about the ring-fencing of capital receipts before amounts are known and the use of such receipts has been considered in the light of the Council's overall financial position.

The existing General Fund capital programme includes a limited amount of capital receipts in relation to two regeneration schemes – Haslam House and Waxwell Lane. The HRA capital programme includes assumptions on levels of right to buy receipts as well as other capital receipts.

12. Multi-Year Capital Projects

Capital projects deliver assets which will provide services and/or income to the Council for a number of years. As a result of the significance and complexity of a number of these projects they may take a number of years to plan and deliver.

When setting the Capital Programme Council will approve the schemes to be included, the budget for their delivery and the timescale in which they are to be achieved. Unless schemes have clearly defined development and delivery phases with separate objectives, budgets and timescales Council should be asked to approve a budget to cover the whole of the project being delivered. Approval of the entire budget at the point of inception gives certainty for the project and assists officers in ensuring delivery.

The budget for approval will include an expected cash flow projection showing how much of the anticipated project budget will be incurred in each year of the Capital Programme. Any variations in timing of cash flows between years will be reported as part of the budget monitoring process. This should be regarded as part of the normal development of a capital project.

13. Use of capital receipt flexibilities.

In the Spending Review 2015, it was announced that to support local authorities to deliver more efficient and sustainable services, the government will allow local authorities to send up to 100% of their fixed asset receipts on the revenue costs of reform projects. This flexibility was initially offered for the three years 2016/17 to 2018/19, but has been extended as a part of the 2018/19 Finance settlement for a further 3 years from 2019/20 to 2021/22.

The Council signified its intent to make use of this flexibility in its final budget report to Cabinet and Council in February 2016. In November 2016, Cabinet approved a number of asset disposals and the capital receipts from these disposals are being applied within the new flexibilities. In 2017/18 capital receipt flexibilities of £3.039m were applied and the budget for 2018/19 includes capital receipt flexibilities of £2.7m. For 2019/20 a further £800k is assumed as part of this draft budget report and will be reported to February Cabinet and finally approved by full Council in February 2019.

Section 2 – Selecting, Approving and Monitoring Capital Schemes

14. The Importance of Capital Business Cases

The processes described in the following section are to be regarded as the authority's formal procedures for setting and monitoring capital projects. This process has been developed to ensure that the Council's capital programme contains schemes which are in line with objectives, meet its asset management requirements and are both affordable and deliverable. This process will give elected members confidence that decisions they are being asked to make regarding the capital programme have been based on a sound system of decision making.

All capital schemes to be considered in the capital programme must have been the subject of an evaluation process including a business case to ensure the Council can target its capital resources effectively.

15. Information to be considered in Capital Decision Making

When making decisions as to which schemes are included on the capital programme the presented business case must include information on these main factors.

- Financials – All anticipated costs and potential revenue streams must be set out. This should include risk analysis to show factors which may impact upon those numbers and where appropriate sensitivity analysis to show potential future scenarios.
- Strategic Objectives – As discussed capital schemes must meet Council priorities and the ability of a scheme to impact upon objectives must be clearly demonstrated. This should include the wider social and environmental impact of the capital project. This must be accompanied by evidence supporting the conclusions made.
- Capacity - All capital schemes, even those funded by external sources, require officers within the Council to implement them and this must be considered as part of the appraisal process. Where a project requires the procuring of additional resource to deliver the scheme this detail must be included in the financial analysis.
- Deliverability - The success of capital projects depends not just on the financial and non-financial resources of the Council. External factors which impact on the deliverability of the project should also be considered as part of the planning process.

16. Governance of the Capital Programme

This strategy sets out the governance relationship relating to the capital programme and the respective role of Members and Officers in relation to the decision making process. The roles of the various groups are as follows.

Decision making on the capital programme is likely to be an iterative and often circular process with information flowing both ways between these respective groups.

As an example the following timescale may be followed for producing the capital programme during the main budget setting process.

Council

- Formally agrees the capital programme
- Receives budget monitoring reports covering financial and non-financial elements of capital schemes
- Approves commercial capital investments

Capital Forum

- Allows panel a chance to comment on capital schemes before formal approval of releasing the funding approved as part of the Capital Programme

Corporate Team

- Reviews Business Cases submitted
- Performs initial sift of viable schemes
- Approves proposed list of capital schemes
-

Service Managers / Heads of Service

- Identify priorities and opportunities for capital investment
- Act as, or appoint, project managers to lead on schemes and complete outline business cases

17. In-Year Capital Decisions

Selecting projects to go onto the Capital Programme must remain possible outside of the usual capital budget setting process. The authority needs the flexibility to take advantage of schemes which present themselves at any stage during the year.

Capital schemes presented in year should go through the same appraisal process as schemes considered at budget setting time. The business case must indicate that they are self-financing (through an external grant or savings/income which meets borrowing costs).

Capital schemes fully funded by external grants should not automatically be included on the capital programme without a process of due consideration as even fully funded schemes have a cost in relation to officer time.

18. Monitoring Capital Projects

Effective monitoring of projects is a vital element of good capital governance.

Capital projects are often significant not only in terms of financial resources required but in terms of organisational capacity, impact upon Service delivery and reputational risk. It is therefore vital that there is sufficient monitoring carried out upon schemes to allow stakeholders to be informed of progress and for members and officers to make decisions as required.

In order to meet these requirements the Corporate Team will receive a quarterly monitoring report showing the current spend against capital projects, the forecast for the end of the financial year include the underspend or slippage into the following year at the end of each financial quarter, with an outturn report at year-end.

Cabinet will receive quarterly information on the progress of capital projects as part of the quarterly finance update. budget monitoring reports already received.

Schemes requiring additional funding to be committed by the Council as a result of either changes in cost estimate or extensions of scope will be the subject of a report to, and decision by, both Cabinet and Council. It should be regarded as a key element of a well-managed capital programme

Section 3- Financing the Capital Programme

20. Capital Funding

There are a number of distinct sources of funding which can be utilised to finance capital expenditure. Some funding sources are ring fenced and can only be used for Housing Revenue Account capital expenditure, or a particular capital project. Consideration of funding must be made when projects are at the planning stage. No capital project will be put forward without funding having been identified to complete the project. Where capital schemes are in multiple phases, perhaps requiring an initial development phase to ensure funding for the final phases, this will be considered as part of the planning stage and clearly reported.

Capital funding cannot be used to fund revenue costs which may arise from a capital scheme such as consultant's costs on feasibility before a project is identified.

21. Capital Resources

Capital Receipts

The sale of assets with a value of more than £10,000 generates income known as capital receipts. Legislation requires these to be spent on either new capital investment or the repayment of existing debt. The government is allowing some flexibility in the use of capital

receipts up until 31 March 2022 to fund revenue costs of transformation projects where these are expected to generate revenue savings in future years.

HRA Right to Buy compulsory sale of council houses generate receipts that may be retained to cover the cost of transacting the sales and to cover outstanding debt on the property sold, but a proportion of the remainder must be surrendered to Central Government.

All other HRA capital receipts may be retained provided they are spent on affordable housing, regeneration or paying off housing debt.

General Fund capital receipts can be retained in full. These can arise from the sale of land and buildings, vehicles, plant and equipment, and also through the repayment of loans or grants.

An active asset management planning process is needed to review the asset requirements of the Council and therefore to identify surplus assets which may be sold to generate capital receipts.

Reserves

Reserves are set aside from revenue resources and earmarked for particular purposes. The capital reserve is earmarked to be used to finance properly authorised capital schemes. At any one time, some or all of the capital reserve will be earmarked to finance part of the current year and future years' capital programme. Revenue reserves may also be used to fund the Capital Programme.

Prudential Borrowing

The Council is able to borrow money on the money market or from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) to fund capital schemes. A preferential Certainty Rate of interest is allocated

to Councils who apply for it and it is the policy of this Council to take advantage of the certainty rate each year.

For all schemes initially funded from borrowing, the Council will have to fund the repayment and interest costs as there is no longer any central government "supported borrowing" allocations and related revenue support.

The Council is only able to borrow for Prudential Borrowing, under the guidance contained in the CIPFA Prudential Code whereby, in summary, the Council is required to ensure that all borrowing is both prudent and affordable. All schemes funded from prudential borrowing are approved by full Council. As part of the Treasury Management Strategy each year full Council approves a limit for affordable borrowing and capital schemes will be considered in the light of that limit.

22. External Funding

Capital Grant from Government or Government Agency

Central government and government agencies provide capital grant funding that can be either ring fenced or non-ring fenced. Examples of ring fenced grants that the Council has received are disabled facilities grants (DFG's) and Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) funding.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Any monies received from developers for infrastructure from the Community Infrastructure Levy will not be allocated to a specific service but will be allocated under the CIL arrangements ("the Regulation 123 List") in line with Council's capital scheme priorities.

The process for allocating CIL funds will be in accordance with the process agreed by Cabinet

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Funding

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) enables the council to raise funds for infrastructure from new development. It is levied on the net increase in floor space arising from new developments and is paid when that development starts. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) is a tool for local authorities to support the development of their area by funding the provision, improvement, replacement, operation or maintenance of infrastructure. However the focus of CIL is on the delivery of new infrastructure to meet and mitigate the impacts of new development in an area.

CIL receipts can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure including transport, schools, health and social care facilities, libraries, play areas, green spaces and sports facilities. Harrow’s list of strategic infrastructure requirements known as a Regulation 123 list is shown below:

Regulation 123 List

The following table comprises Harrow Council’s Regulation 123 List. It includes the strategic infrastructure that the Council currently considers it is likely to apply CIL revenues to. The Regulation 123 List will be kept under review and may change depending upon the following:

- Changes to local or national funding streams in respect of CIL eligible infrastructure; and
- The requirements of the regulations governing the level of the “meaningful proportion” of CIL that is to be passed to local communities.

Infrastructure currently considered likely to benefit from the application of CIL funding	
Education facilities	Early years, primary and secondary schools
Health services	GPs, acute healthcare
Social care	Supported accommodation
Emergency services	Police, Ambulance and Fire Services
Cultural and community facilities	Libraries and community halls
Improvements to public open space	Parks, natural green space, civic space and green corridors and green grid
Improvements to biodiversity	
Public recreation and leisure facilities	Neighbourhood and Youth Play space, sports and leisure centres, swimming pools and playing pitches
Cemeteries and burial space	
Strategic transport facilities	Roads, buses, cycling, rail and underground
Strategic flood mitigation	

Of all CIL monies collected, 85% is used to fund strategic borough wide infrastructure projects, which includes a 5% allowance to cover the administrative costs of CIL. The decisions on where to spend CIL at a borough-wide level is determined by the Council. The remaining 15% is allocated to Neighbourhood CIL (NCIL) and must be spent on projects that have taken account of the views of the communities in which the income was generated and these projects should support the development of the area.

A report was presented to the Major Development Panel (MDP) on 14th November 2017, recommending that the allocation of Borough and Neighbourhood CIL is included as part of the Annual Budget Setting process and included in the Capital Programme report which goes to Cabinet in draft in December and in February in its final version. The recommendations from the Major Development Panel (MDP) report were agreed by Cabinet on 7th December 2017 which agreed:

- *the allocation of the Borough Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) be included as part of the Annual Budget Setting process and included in the Capital Programme report which is presented to Cabinet every year in December (draft budget) and February (final budget);*
-
- Specific projects to be funded by Neighbourhood CIL can be put forward by the relevant Directorates / Ward members and assessed against the criteria outlined in the CIL Allocations report agreed by the Major Development Panel in November 2017. The final decision on what projects are funded from the agreed NCIL allocations will be delegated to the Divisional Director – Regeneration and Planning, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Planning, and Finance and Commercialisation

. The recommendation for NCIL was as follows:

- (i) the broad allocation of Neighbourhood CIL be agreed as part of the Capital Programme (based on available funds at the time and allocated as per 3(i) and 3(ii) above), and included in the Capital Programme report which is presented to Cabinet every year in December (draft budget) and February (final budget).*
- (ii) Once the broad allocation of NCIL is agreed as part of the Capital Programme, individual projects put forward by the relevant Directorates / Ward Members be assessed against the criteria outlined in section 7 of the MDP report (including the extent of consultation and level of community support), with the final decision on what projects were funded from the agreed CIL allocations being delegated to the Divisional Director of Regeneration and Planning, following consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Regeneration and Planning, and Finance and Commercialisation.*

The Borough CIL element will be used to fund the core Capital programme and can be considered as a funding source for new capital bids as well as existing projects in the Capital programme.

In addition to the principles already reached on how CIL funding should be used to fund the capital programme, in light of the budget gaps in future years, it was recommended by Cabinet in December 2018, that CIL should be **first** be applied to any schemes in the existing capital programme rather than applying it to new schemes. The rationale for this is that if applied to schemes that are currently funded from borrowing, by funding from CIL instead, this will reduce the existing capital financing costs.

Section 106 Agreements

Developer consents may attract Section 106 funding to spend on a particular asset or site as an alternative to CIL.

Capital contributions from partner organisation

When capital projects are devised it is open for project managers to invite funding from a range of partner organisations.

Revenue contributions Services who are leading a capital project may make savings within their revenue budgets during a particular year and in some circumstances use that saving to part-fund a capital project.

23. Policy on use of Capital Funding

The Council will look to use external funding sources where possible to meet the funding requirements of its capital programme.

Where the use of Council resources are required the authority will look to utilise reserves, revenue funding or capital receipts as these create no long term revenue cost implications on the Council.

Borrowing will be used as the last possible source of funding and should be restricted only to those schemes which generate sufficient savings or income to meet the costs of interest and the Minimum Revenue Provision.

Any borrowing incurred to support the provision of new build housing within the Housing Revenue Account must be demonstrated to be affordable over a period of 30 years.

24. Relationship between Capital Strategy and Treasury Management

Treasury management refers to the processes of managing and reporting on the Council's performance in matters of investment and borrowing.

The Council's policy on Treasury Management has numerous links to the Capital Strategy. It is not intended that this Strategy replace the reporting requirements of the Treasury Management Strategy and includes a summary of the major points of that strategy and associated governance processes.

Key Treasury decisions are the responsibility of full Council and are contained within the Treasury Management Strategy.

These include

- Approved limits on borrowing
- Limits for investment types and counterparty limits
- Planned capital expenditure
- Estimates for the future Capital Financing Requirement
- Policy on the Minimum Revenue Provision

Detailed discussion on these matters is delegated to the GARMS Committee who then makes recommendations to Cabinet. The key impact of a capital programme using borrowing is the creation of a "Capital Financing Requirement" (CFR). The CFR represents

the need to borrow external funds as a result of expenditure funded through borrowing. Having a CFR creates the need for a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), a sum to be put to one side each year from the General Fund for repayment of debt.

The Council's MRP policy is to make provision for the repayment of debt equally over the life of the asset that the borrowing relates to.

The Audit and Standards Committee receive at a minimum a mid-year monitoring report for Treasury management and an end of year outturn report. Where circumstances require, such as a material fall in the value of investments, a report would be prepared and presented to the next meeting of the Committee by the S151 Officer.

Section 4- Risk Management

25. Embedding Risk Management in the Capital Programme

The Capital Strategy must be considered alongside the principles of risk management. Risks are inevitable within a capital programme, as with all aspects of Council operations, and effective management of risk is a vital part of the capital strategy.

The types of risk the authority is exposed to in the Capital Programme are summarised below;

- Financial Risk** – The risk of significant cost overruns or commercial investments not performing as expected. The authority has a low appetite for this risk as it would impact upon available resources. Mitigation will be in the form of close scrutiny of capital spending through the budget monitoring process.

- Strategic Risk** – The risk of not delivering key Council priorities or projects. Mitigation will be in the form of careful selection and planning of capital projects before commencement and project managers reviewing project progress and taking corrective action where necessary. Major changes in the outcomes of schemes will be reported to the appropriate Committee.

- Governance risk** – The risk of capital spending decisions not being appropriately considered and decisions not being made at the correct level. Mitigation is the governance principles contained within the capital strategy.

- Resourcing risk** – The risk that insufficient funds are available to fund the capital programme or that the incorrect type of funds is applied to capital projects. This is mitigated

by the financing of capital projects being reviewed by the S151 Officer as part of the budget setting and the outturn.

26. Knowledge and Skills within the organisation

The Property Services team has officers of multiple disciplines who are experienced at leading capital projects, managing the Council's property portfolio and working within the local property market. They have experience of dealing with acquisitions, disposals, new commercial and residential development and redevelopment of brownfield sites.

The Finance team are involved in the development and monitoring of the Capital Programme. They have many years of experience in managing local authority capital programmes.

Legal Services will be provided by the Council's in-house legal team who will form a key part of the decision making around Capital projects. All solicitors are required to complete an annual Statement of Competence to the regulatory body to ensure any professional training needs are identified and addressed.

Where necessary external advice may be sought for all types of financial, property and legal advice. These costs, or at least appropriate estimates, will be included in the business cases of capital schemes.

Officers will work with members to ensure that training needs for elected members are appropriately identified. As a minimum annual training will be provided around the Treasury Management Strategy.