

CAPITAL STRATEGY

1. The Council's Aims

Six key aims of Eastbourne Borough Council are set out in the Corporate Plan. They were developed following consultations with Members and reflect the results of an extensive Citizens' Survey. The Council has established a Local Strategic Partnership with the East Sussex County Council, Eastbourne Downs Primary Care Trust, Eastbourne Chamber of Commerce, Sussex Police, East Sussex Learning Partnership and local registered social landlords. The LSP has agreed a project structure for the development of a Community Strategy by April 2003. Work is progressing initially on three priority areas for the Strategy: economic and community regeneration, inclusive communities and environmental sustainability. It is envisaged that the Community Strategy will eventually lead to amendments to the existing Council Aims.

The six Corporate Aims are:

- To make Eastbourne a safe place to live, work and visit.
- To develop a strong and sustainable local economy, encouraging business and investment.
- To protect and improve health and reduce health inequalities.
- To enhance the opportunities for enjoyment through active pursuits and simple relaxation.
- To encourage a fair and socially inclusive society.
- To protect and enhance the Borough's environment, sympathetically developing it for future generations.

2. Capital Objectives, priorities and spending plans

In order to deliver the key aims the Council has identified priorities for capital. Information on expenditure required has come from individual service strategies, the asset management plan, best value reviews, consultation with residents and visitor surveys. These have been considered by the Corporate Management Team and endorsed by Cabinet. The six key aims are set out below together with the agreed strategy for capital to support each.

2.1 Corporate aim: Make Eastbourne a safe place to live, work and visit.

The capital objectives which support this aim are:

- i) Ensuring that all Eastbourne residents have access to housing which is safe and secure. We support this with capital investment in our own housing stock, through grants to private sector households and through partnership working with other social landlords. Details are set out in the Housing Strategy.
- ii) Maintaining sea defences through coast protection works defined within the beach management plan.
- iii) Giving high priority to Health and Safety requirements in all Council-run buildings. Details are provided in the Asset Management Plan.

2.2 Corporate aim: Protect and improve health and reduce health inequalities

within Eastbourne.

The Capital Objectives which support this are:

iv) Ensuring a wide range of accessible sports facilities are available for residents. We support this objective by direct provision of sports centres. The strategy for developing our own centres was determined through the best value review of Leisure Services and further details are in the Asset Management Plan. We also work in partnership to develop new facilities e.g. Eastbourne Sports Park was developed with Lottery and GOSE funding and funding for improvements is negotiated with partners. Finally, we retain open spaces for sporting use and encourage local groups to develop sporting activities in these areas.

v) Eradicating housing conditions which have an adverse impact on health. This is supported through the capital programme for our own stock and Renovation and Staying Put grants to improve living conditions for the occupiers of damp unfit private sector houses.

vi) Enabling disabled residents to live independently through investment in disabled facilities and adaptations for both our own and private sector dwellings.

2.3 Corporate aim: Develop a strong and sustainable local economy, encouraging business and investment into Eastbourne.

The Capital Objectives which support this Aim are:

vii) Ensuring the town remains attractive as a tourist destination through preservation of existing attractions and development of new ones. This is achieved through investment in the attractions we own ourselves (seafront, downland, theatres, museums). Details of investment plans are provided in the Asset Management Plan. We also work in partnership to secure investment for new attractions with the aim that these can be sustained without Council funding and ideally generate profits to support other Council activities.

viii) Providing attractive conference facilities. Details of investment proposals are contained in the Asset Management Plan.

ix) Supporting business development in the town. Funding for external initiatives in the capital programme is intended for this purpose and could be used to pump prime an Enterprise Hub.

x) Use of affordable housing developments to support regeneration. Details are contained in the Housing Strategy.

xi) Developments of affordable housing for key workers in partnership with registered social landlords. Details are in the Housing Strategy

2.4 Corporate aim: Enhance the opportunities for enjoyment within Eastbourne through active pursuits and simple relaxation.

The Capital Objectives which support this Aim are:

xii) Maintain quality spaces for relaxation and play. Proposals for development of parks and playgrounds have been agreed following the best value review of leisure. Investment details are contained in the Asset Management Plan.

xiii) Develop and promote leisure activities. The strategy for improvements to current services has been agreed following the best value review of leisure. Plans for investment in Council-run facilities are contained in the Asset Management Plan.

2.5 Corporate aim: encourage a fair and socially inclusive society.

The Capital Objectives which support this Aim are:

xiv) Ensuring all Council-run buildings are accessible for all members of the community. The work programmes to support this are contained in the Asset Management Plan.

xv) Ensuring affordable housing is available within the town. Affordable housing plays a key role in promoting social inclusion and developing sustainable communities. It is central to addressing poverty as well as to the improvement of health, education and employment objectives for the town.

xvi) Improving the accessibility of Council services. The programmes which support this are the Accommodation Strategy (see Asset Management Plan) and the E Government Strategy.

2.6 Corporate aim: protect and enhance the Borough's environment, sympathetically developing it for future generations.

The Capital Objectives which support this Aim are:

xvii) Protection and sympathetic maintenance of the Downlands. A summary of planned works is contained in the Asset Management Plan.

xviii) Maintenance and preservation of heritage assets such as the Winter Garden, Redoubt and Bandstand. Work programmes are set out in the Asset Management Plan.

xix) Regeneration of run down parts of the Borough. Programmes which contribute to this include Heritage Economic Regeneration Scheme funding for improvements to Seaside Road, the Cultural Hub development (see Asset Management Plan).

xx) Promotion of energy efficiency in our own buildings and for both Council owned and private sector dwellings (see Housing Strategy).

2.7 Prioritisation and approach to funding

2.7.1 Council resources

The forecast resources (excluding capital receipts) available to the Council over the next five years are:

		2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07
		£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
	Basic Credit Approvals	1,189	1,165	1,165	1,165	1,165
	Major Repairs Allowance	2,427	2,470	2,470	2,470	2,470

	Disabled Facilities Grant	242	240	240	240	240
	E Government Grant	200	200			
	Coast Protection Grant	30	100	1,100	100	100
	Revenue contributions	47	1,500	-	-	-
		4,135	5,675	4,975	3,975	3,975

Capital priorities

The Council has agreed the following priorities for use of available resources:

1. Working towards compliance with Statutory Obligations e.g. Health & Safety, Disability, Discrimination Act for strategically important buildings within statutory timeframes.
2. Underwrite of the fundraising target for the Cultural Hub.
3. Housing Revenue Account investment to work towards the Decent Homes target.
4. Backlog maintenance for assets which it is strategically important for the Council to own and for which alternative funding options are not available.
5. Match funding for a target of 155 new affordable housing developments each year to contribute towards the 400 plus additional units required each year up to 2006.
6. Provide 40% contribution to fund a target of 40 Disabled Facilities Grants each year.
7. Match funding for other capital projects which take forward Council priorities and strategies and where a high proportion of funding is available externally.
8. Funding for other projects which take forward Council priorities and strategies for which no alternative sources of funding are available.
9. Funding for private sector housing renewal assistance for up to 160 properties to improve unfit homes, make minor repairs to assist the elderly to remain in their own homes, to improve energy efficiency, to provide home security and safety measures and to assist leaseholders to upgrade fire precautions in HMOs.

3. Resources

The Council has agreed the following target programmes to implement the strategy over this year and the next 5 years:-

	2002/03	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	2006/06
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Council Housing	3,114	4,610	3,110	3,110	3,110
Other Housing	2,175	2,147	2,147	2,147	2,147
Disabled Access	100	50	50		
Other major works	300	100	100	100	100
Parks	100	100	100	100	100
Leisure facilities	200	100	100	300	300
Coast Protection	30	100	1,100	100	100
Hub Fund raising reserve	430	530	200	200	
E Government	200	200			
Architects	30	30	30	30	30
External initiatives					200
	6,679	7,967	6,937	6,087	6,087
Capital receipts required to fund this are estimated at:					
	2,544	2,292	1,962	2,112	2,112

4. Proposals for Delivering Strategy

4.1 Partnership Working, using private finance, external bidding

The Council recognises that it cannot achieve all the investment that is required alone. It is therefore committed to finding partners who can provide expertise and finance and assist the Council to draw down public funds. Examples of this are:

- The Eastbourne Reborn partnership has attracted £5 million SRB funding which includes £2.2 million towards the creation of the Cultural Hub in Devonshire Park. Bids have also been submitted to the Arts Council and Heritage Lottery Fund to support this scheme alongside capital receipts and other contributions.
- The Council has negotiated a 25 year lease of the Treasure Island seafront leisure and entertainment centre. The lessees are providing £1 million capital investment in return for operating the revitalised attraction.
- Funding for affordable housing developments levers in significant private finance raised by our Joint Commissioning Housing Association partners.
- In conjunction with Eastbourne's Crime Reduction Partnership, Communities Against Drugs funding has been secured for a range of capital projects designed to combat drug use.
- Eastbourne Sure Start is an ambitious 10 year partnership plan aimed at improving the quality of life for children aged 0-4 years and their families. In addition to significant revenue funding over the 10 year period, over £1m of capital funding will be available to provide suitable facilities for Sure Start services.
- A partnership with Securicor Information Services for the provision of I.T. support and development is enabling investment in major new I.T. systems for revenues, benefits, payroll and personnel. It is also providing funds to implement the I.T. and E-Government strategies.

4.2 Effective procurement.

The Council has agreed a Service Procurement Strategy which requires the best method of delivering services to be considered. This includes consideration of whether services should be retained in-house, outsourced, outsourced as part of a partnership agreement or ceased. This approach is used as part of all best value reviews and has resulted in a range of procurement strategies for Council assets.

The Council seeks to use contracts to secure investment in its assets over time. The current plans to transfer leisure centres to a trust are an example of this.

4.3 Capital Receipts.

The Council's policy is to retain capital assets only where they contribute to the achievement of the key aims. They may do this by enabling direct service delivery, by providing accommodation for backup and central services, or by generating an income stream commensurate with their value. In order to implement this policy, all capital assets are being reviewed by the Corporate Property Officer and his team.

4.4 Corporate allocation of resources.

In the past the Council's practice has been to allow services to reinvest any capital receipts generated. Coupled with a reactive approach to disposals, this has meant that almost all capital receipts were generated from Right to Buy sales and earmarked for Housing. Cabinet have now endorsed a corporate approach to the allocation of all capital receipts. For the future, all capital receipts will be available for investment in accordance with the priorities within this strategy. Cabinet will consider the best use of available resources to achieve the Council's aims, taking account of the recommendations of Corporate Management Team.

4.5 Revenue consequences of capital expenditure

Revenue costs and savings flowing from investment are identified as part of the approval process and are being built into a new medium term strategy for the revenue budgets.

4.6 Monitoring programme delivery.

Expenditure profiles are required for all approved capital projects. Progress against the profiles is monitored monthly by responsible budget managers and is being reported to Cabinet bi-monthly. Measurable outcomes are defined for all new projects and achievement of these is monitored and reported to Cabinet on an annual basis. The first such report was received by Cabinet on 1 July.

3 **Summary**

The Council is committed to securing investment in the town to take forward its key aims. It will achieve this by making the best use of its own resources, working in partnership to attract new resources in and ensuring that decisions on priorities reflect the views of all stakeholders.