

For Audit & Governance Committee meeting Monday 13th March 2017

To
Cllr Trevor Jones, Chairman, and members of the committee

Re agenda item 8 - Update on the Property Rationalisation Programme

I am sorry that I am unable to attend the Committee due to a prior commitment. I note and welcome the Committee's continued interest in the property rationalisation programme and would like to register a few comments with the Committee.

I commend the report to the Committee and trust that it provides a sufficient update on the earlier Action Plan.

The report shows that there has been good progress with a number of measures in the programme, and that while appreciating that there is a long way to go, we are now seeing significant benefits both to the revenue and capital accounts arising from property rationalisation, as well as wider organisational benefits in terms of more modern and flexible workplaces supporting cultural change within the workforce which is so critical to delivery of the Forward Together initiative.

The programme is also now building momentum and it is important for services to continue to work with our property team to ensure that the way in which they deliver services makes them less reliant on 'bricks and mortar' over time.

While we all agreed the ambition for the programme was set deliberately high, we remain of the view that it is better to risk falling short of challenging targets than to exceed easy or unambitious ones.

Finally, we continue to work with and through the Dorset Development Partnership to find more innovative ways of adding value to the County Council's assets and helping us meet the objectives of the property rationalisation programme.

Cllr Robin Cook
Cabinet Member for Organisational Development & Transformation
9th March 2017