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**OVERVIEW OF EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

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Since the last meeting of the Council, the following are the main areas of work the Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-

- (a) **Taking the Lead – Self Regulation and Improvement in Local Government** – We have received a presentation on the background and principles in relation to the Local Government Association’s report ‘Taking the Lead - Self Regulation and Improvement in Local Government. The report sets out a number of proposals for self-regulation and improvement in local government which centre around two key principles of authorities being responsible for their own performance and for leading the delivery of improved outcomes for local people in their area and being accountable to their local communities. The presentation outlined the role of Members in taking forward the key principles and, the particular role of Scrutiny, in scrutinising performance management and the progress against previously agreed priorities. This is an area of work which will cut across all Scrutiny Committees, however, the overall responsibility for scrutinising this, will sit with our Scrutiny Committee.
  
- (b) **Medium-Term Financial Plan Timetable Update** – We have been reminded of the timetable for consideration and approval of the Medium-Term Financial Plan for 2013/14. Although Cabinet has agreed to prepare detailed budget estimates on the basis of current agreed and planned service levels and there will be no detailed budget reduction proposals for public consultation in this plan, our Scrutiny Committee will be involved in challenging and scrutinising the draft 2013/17 Medium-Term Financial Plan early in January 2013. We also had a discussion at our meeting, on the recent announcement by the Government regarding the requirement on any Council planning an increase in Council Tax above two per cent in 2013/14, to hold a referendum. As Members will be aware, Darlington’s Medium-Term Financial Plan is based on the assumption of a 3.5 per cent Council Tax increase. If Darlington were to increase by two per cent instead of 3.5 per cent, the pressure on the Plan would be £2.5 million.
  
- (c) **Asset Management** – As part of the work of the Asset Management Task and Finish Review Group, we held a meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2012, to consider the future planned maintenance and financial implications of maintaining the Council’s property portfolio. We had a very useful discussion at this meeting on the recent management changes which had been implemented to bring responsibility for the property portfolio together under the management of the Corporate Landlord Team and to the benefits of doing this and on the projected expenditure for the future planned maintenance of the

Town Hall building to keep it operational in future years.

**Councillor Ian Haszeldine**  
**Chair Efficiency and Resources Scrutiny Committee**