
OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Resources Portfolio:

(a) Organisational Development:

- (i) **HR Strategy Leading-Edge People** – We have approved the Human Resource Strategy. This is an integral strand of the new Organisational Development Strategy, Leading Edge. The Council recognises that its workforce is a key resource in delivering its services and the Strategy is therefore crucial to ensure that it has the workforce capacity to support the organisation’s vision, values and objectives.
- (ii) **ICT Strategy** – We have further approved a revised ICT Strategy. This is aligned to the Darlington Community Strategy and, as with the HR Strategy, forms an integral part of the Council’s Organisational Development Strategy, Leading Edge. It will provide a framework for the further development of ICT in relation to improved customer and business services.

(b) Treasury Management Annual Report and Outturn Prudential Indicators 2006/07 – In accordance with the Council’s reporting procedures, we have approved the actual 2006/07 Prudential Indicators and noted the Treasury Management Annual report for 2006/07. Overall the report shows Treasury Management has been done efficiently and effectively.

(c) Accommodation – Invest to Save – To facilitate the significant change agenda which the Council is facing in the short to medium-term, we need to make available some additional office accommodation for our workforce during 2008. Cabinet authorised myself and the Director of Corporate Services to negotiate and agree terms for a lease for an appropriate property.

(d) Combined Financial and Service Performance Report 1st Quarter 2007 – We have received a report combining financial and service performance for the Councils for the period April to July 2007. Overall the Council is on target for service performance with nearly 85 per cent of targets for national and local indicators being met. 93 per cent of actions in the Corporate Plan against Community Strategy themes are on target.

(e) Annual Review of Significant Partnerships 2006/07 – Following national guidance on the corporate governance of partnerships, the first annual review of the Council’s significant partnerships has been completed. The review has been undertaken using the Partnership Toolkit, previously approved by Cabinet, and provides a means for the

Council to monitor the performance of each individual partnership and ensure that corporate governance arrangements are in place. The key partnerships in Darlington make a significant contribution in ensuring that the Council enjoys and maintains positive relationships and develops joint projects with its external partners.

- (f) **ICT Systems Integration – Key Infrastructure** – Funding of £150,000 has been released to implement a number of ICT schemes. These are key to the future development and support of Leading Edge and other initiatives. There are three strands: procurement of software tools to assist with systems integration; preparatory work to be undertaken in order for the Council to establish whether or not a business can be made to adopt the Government Connect programme; expand the Council’s ICT infrastructure to improve options for remote access.
- (g) **Darlington Eastern Corridor – Delegation** – In order to release funding for the Eastern Transport Corridor, the Director of Corporate Services has been granted delegated power to approve and sign the terms and conditions of that grant funding.
- (h) **Proposed Write-off of Irrecoverable Sundry Debts** - We have agreed to write off sundry debtor arrears in respect of invoices with individual values greater than £500 that are considered to be irrecoverable. The total of the sundry debtor arrears which have been written off is £41,320.82. Officers are satisfied that all practical steps for the recovery of these debts have been taken.

2. I have attended the following meetings in respect of my Resource Management Portfolio:

- (a) various Tender opening, and Tendering panels
- (b) briefing meetings with various Directors and Assistant Directors
- (c) Audit Commission interview, 30th August
- (d) Investors in People re-assessment, 13th September

Councillor Stephen Harker
Cabinet Member with Resources Portfolio