
OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Resource Management Portfolio:
 - (a) **Review of Voluntary and Community Sector (Third Sector) in Darlington** – Following a review of how the Council currently engages with the Third Sector in Darlington, we have approved a Voluntary and Community Sector Strategy and Action Plan. The Plan provides a framework for engagement between the Council and the CVS to ensure that the Council can effectively engage with the Third Sector in the design and delivery of services and in the building of social capital. A Steering Group will be responsible for taking forward and monitoring compliance with the strategy; Resources Scrutiny Committee have also expressed an interest in monitoring progress.
 - (b) **Write-off of Irrecoverable Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax** – During 2006/07, the Council has maintained its high level of success in collecting local taxes. 96.6 per cent of the Council Tax due during 2006/07 has been collected and an additional £0.475 million of Council Tax arrears from previous years has also been collected, giving a total collection rate of 98.9 per cent. In-year collection of non-domestic rates is 99.2 per cent, which is an improvement over 2005/06. Cabinet gave approval to write off debts that, despite a number of steps being undertaken, had been deemed irrecoverable.
 - (c) **Contracts Undertaken for External Clients in 2006/07** – Cabinet received information on the level of external trading undertaken by the Community Services Department. During 2006/7 Community Services won contracts to the value of some £2.1m.
 - (d) **Capital Programme Out-turn 2006/07** – Council has undertaken a wide variety of capital improvements throughout the Borough during 2006/07, with a total capital spend of just over £41m, compared to £37m in the previous financial year.
 - (e) **Revenue Out-turn 2006/07** – The Council's 2006/07 Revenue Accounts are close to being finalised, subject to audit. Overall, the financial results for 2006/07 are satisfactory, with corporate reserves being £0.506 million better than the agreed Medium-term Financial Plan and departmental reserves being £0.187 million better.
 - (f) **Land at the corner of Widdowfield Street and Drury Street** – To facilitate a broader community use of the facilities and to modernise an historic leasehold arrangement to benefit the Darlington and District Scout Association and the Northgate Community Partnership, we have agreed to grant a new lease to the Scout Association on premises at the corner of Widdowfield Street and Drury Street. The lease will last for 21 years

and suitable clauses will be included to allow the wider community use of the premises, subject to planning permission being obtained.

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

- (a) Resources Scrutiny Committee, on 22nd June
- (b) Chaired the Joint Consultative Committee, 26th June
- (c) A number of Tender opening, and Tendering panels.
- (d) Briefing meetings with various Directors and Assistant Directors
- (e) In undertaking a new Portfolio I've had meetings with various members of staff relating to that Portfolio

Councillor Stephen Harker
Cabinet Member with Resource Management Portfolio