
OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

1. Since the last ordinary meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work the Resources Scrutiny Committee has undertaken :-
 - (a) **Darlington and Stockton Partnership** – We are continuing to monitor the Stockton and Darlington Partnership project. This is a joint review we are undertaking with Members from Stockton Borough Council and, to date, we have had two meetings of the Group. At the first meeting we received a detailed presentation on the project and the work taking place to investigate the potential for joint working between Darlington and Stockton Councils and, at a more recent meeting, we have considered the outline business case and the recommendations of the 4ps Gateway Review. A report will be submitted to both Council’s Cabinets in November 2007, to seek final approval to the project and we have agreed to give our support to the Business Case.
 - (b) **Third-Sector Strategy** – We have agreed to monitor, on a six-monthly basis, the Third Sector Strategy, a Strategy, which has been produced jointly between the Council and the Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) to strengthen the Council’s Leadership role by establishing the strategic direction for engagement with the Third Sector, to support the sector in building social capital and empowerment of local residents in their ability to influence service provision and to strengthen the position of the CVS.
 - (c) **Climate Change Update** – Following an event, organised by the former Environment Scrutiny Committee on the 5th July, 2007, in relation to Climate Change, we have considered areas within our remit where work could be undertaken to inform the Action Plan on Climate Change for the Darlington and Tees Valley Climate Change Strategies. We will be undertaking work in relation to Energy Management Systems in relation to Council Assets, Green Procurement and the consideration and promotion of Eco-design in relation to the Council’s new build developments. A special meeting has been arranged for the 1st October, 2007, to undertake this piece of work.
 - (d) **2006/07 Cumulative Efficiency Gains and 2007/08 Forward-Look Efficiency Gains** – We have again continued to monitor the Council’s efficiency gains. It is pleasing to note that the Council has achieved higher cumulative efficiency gains in 2006/07 than set by the Department for Communities and Local Government and was on target to achieve the submitted gains for 2007/08.
 - (e) **Treasury Management Report and Actual Prudential Indicators** - We have received the Council’s Treasury Management Annual Report and Actual Prudential Indicators for 2006/07. The Council’s treasury management activities have been

carried out in accordance with Council policy and financing costs have been reduced during the year with a saving of £0.313 million achieved from the approved budget as a result of reduced interest payments, increased cash-flow, interest income and dividends from Newcastle Airport Shares.

- (f) Leading Edge Admin Review** – Updated information has been given on the progress of the review of administration taking place within the Authority. The proposals have identified savings of approximately £320,000, however, due to the phasing of implementation, £130,000 will not be released until year 2.
- (g) Health and Safety** - As part of our monitoring role, we have received information on the work of the Council’s Health and Safety Unit and progress within the Authority against health and safety related performance indicators. The Safety Unit will continue to take a pro-active approach to the management of health and safety within the Authority and we will continue to monitor performance in this area on a six-monthly basis.
- (h) Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan** – As in previous years we have had a special meeting to considered and advised Cabinet that we support the Council’s Capital Strategy and Asset Management Plan. Members have also visited some of this Council’s assets.

I, as Chair, have continued to have various meetings with Officers and have pursued a number of issues raised with me, by Members of the Scrutiny Committee, and reported the responses back to them accordingly.

Councillor Ian Haszeldine
Chair Resources Scrutiny Committee