

CABINET
13th November 2007

Additional Information
Item No. 7(e)

Set out below are the comments of the Director of Corporate Services on the issues raised by the Trades Unions, which were shared with them at the meeting.

“Overall, it is my opinion that given the scale of change involved, this is the most supportive response that could be expected.

- Additional resources will be made available to fill any resourcing requirements during the transitional period.
- I cannot guarantee there will be no compulsory redundancies at this stage but hope they will be minimal or nil.
- With regard to volunteers for redundancy, these will be looked at on a case-by-case basis but our aim has been to minimise redundancy for the workforce therefore there will be limited need to use voluntary redundancy.
- I cannot give a guarantee that should the partnership fail the services will not be outsourced, however I am confident it will be successful.
- Both Corporate Management Teams have agreed to support the partnership and not to ‘circumvent the partnership’.”



Stockton/Darlington Partnership-statement to Council Cabinets

The unions, Unison, GMB, and Unite (T&G) at both Authorities accept that the Councils have an obligation to make savings as part of the Government's medium term financial plans and to obtain Gershon efficiencies. The unions collectively are, however, uncomfortable with being part of a previously untried concept and would ideally prefer the status quo. We agree that a Public-Public Partnership is preferable to any other partnership delivery arrangement.

We do have concerns about the adequacy of the business case and the savings being delivered in the short term, but accept that the Councils are satisfied that long term savings will be made. We consider that additional resources are required for the transitional period.

Our acceptance of the partnership proposals is based on the following conditions:

- Adequate staff will be employed to cover both the transition and to retain, as a minimum, the present level of service**
- That there will be no compulsory redundancies and sympathetic consideration will be given to those wishing to take voluntary redundancy.**
- That all work covered by the Partnership will be undertaken solely by it. The Councils will not allow their organisations to circumvent the Partnership by employing other contractors and /or creating alternative structures. e.g. for print and design and ICT work.**
- If the Partnership fails, the services will not be outsourced**

We are pleased that consultation to date has been adequate and productive. We have received confirmation that detailed consultation will continue throughout the implementation process and we seek assurances that additional resources will be made available if necessary to ensure a successful transition and implementation of the Partnership. We will continue to work with the Councils and the Partnership Board to ensure the best outcome for our members and clients.