
OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Resources Portfolio:
 - (a) **Insurance Tender** - The joint procurement exercise with Stockton Borough Council for insurance services has just been concluded. The Council has renewed its insurance contract with Zurich Municipal for a further five years with a reduction in annual insurance recharges for this Authority of some £900,000. The reduction results from recognition of pro-active risk management work within the Council, a very good claims history, the innovative joint procurement initiative and current market conditions.
 - (b) **Treasury Management Annual Report and Outturn Prudential Indicators 2007/08** – In accordance with the Council’s reporting procedures, we have received information regarding the regulation and management of the Council’s borrowing, investment and cash-flow. There is a later item on this agenda for Council seeking approval of outturn Prudential Indicators for 2007/08.
 - (c) **Depot Relocation - Procurement** – The contract for the new depot facility is proceeding to tender stage. In accordance with the revised Contract Procedure Rules, which came into effect on the 1st April, 2008, a procurement strategy for the construction of the depot has been approved by Cabinet and we have agreed project governance arrangements which are to be put in place to manage this project.
 - (d) **Procurement – Forward Plan** – Again, following the revision to the Council’s Contract Procedure Rules, we have agreed the criteria which will be used to determine whether individual contracts are deemed to be strategic or non-strategic. In line with the new Procedure Rules, all Strategic contracts will be submitted to Cabinet for approval and decisions on remaining contracts will be taken by Officers.
 - (e) **Capital Process Review** – Consideration has been given to the work which has been done within the Authority to ensure that, in future, there are consistent arrangements for project management within the Council. Project Management Control Documents have been developed which will provide support and guidance on future project delivery to ensure that projects are delivered in a consistent and effective way throughout the Council.
 - (f) **Beech Wood Depot – Disposal** – Agreement was given to demolish the Council depot at Beech Wood. The Depot had been used by horticultural services, however since the implementation of Street Scene, it is no longer required for service delivery and there is evidence that there is no sustainable future use for the building. Following its demolition, the area will be turned back to its natural environment tying in with the on-

going improvements within Beech Wood.

- (g) **Capital Programme Out-turn 2007/08** – We have received information on the delivery of the Council’s Capital Programme and the financial out-turn position as at 31st March, 2008, together with information on the proposed financing of the 2007/08 capital expenditure.
- (h) **Combined Revenue Account Results and Service Performance Report - Year-end 2007/08** – It is pleasing to report that overall, the Council is on target with regard to service performance. Efficiency gains are projected to be £653,000 better than the mid-year Annual Efficiency Submission and Revenue reserves are £297,000 below the planned level in the draft Medium-Term Financial Plan which was reported to Cabinet on the 16th January, 2008.
- (i) **Proposed Write-off of Irrecoverable Sundry Debts** – Cabinet agreed to write off sundry debtor arrears in respect of invoices with individual values greater than £500 that are considered to be irrecoverable. It was also reported to Cabinet those sundry debts with individual values less than £500 that have been written off by Officers under delegated powers. The total of the sundry debtor arrears which have been written off is £45,604.95.

To give this context, this debt is from invoices issued with a total value of £28.3m. Thus the Council has collected 99.84% of the value of invoices issued. The report outlined the steps taken by Officers to recover outstanding debts.

- (j) **Darlington and District Indoor Bowls Club** – We have agreed to give financial support of £30,000 to the Darlington and District Indoor Bowls Club and we have agreed to write off rent arrears of £38,497. At the same time Officers will be assisting the Club with the production of a Business Plan to provide on-going support to it.

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

- (a) Resources Scrutiny meetings – 28th July, 18th September
- (b) Community Grants – 26th August
- (c) Cabinet – 9th September
- (d) HR appeal – 16th September, 25th September
- (e) Various briefings with Directors and Assistant Directors

Councillor Stephen Harker
Cabinet Member with Resources Portfolio