
OVERVIEW OF EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Efficiency and Resources Portfolio :-
 - (a) **Procurement Plan** - In accordance with Contract Procedure Rules, we have considered the Annual Procurement Plan and determined, again, in accordance with criteria, which contracts for the forthcoming year shall be delegated to the Officers and which are deemed to be strategic. Subsequent contracts will necessitate a revised Plan being brought to Cabinet.
 - (b) **Regulation of Investigatory Powers (RIPA)** – As Members may have seen, the Government have published proposals to limit the powers available to Councils under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. The 2000 Act enables local authorities to carry out certain types of surveillance activity provided that specified procedures are followed, however, if implemented, the proposals will stop local authority use of the powers unless it is for a serious offence (punishable by custodial sentences of 6 months or more) and will require authorisation by a magistrate. The proposals will lead to additional work for Officers and could potentially slow down the authorisation process; however, it will help to give public reassurance of the appropriateness of the use of the RIPA powers.
 - (c) **Revenue Budget Management 2010/11** - We have considered the current position of the revenue budget as part of the Council’s continuous financial management processes. We were advised that the projected revenue reserves at the end of 2010/11 are showing an overall improvement of £2.872 million, compared with the 2010/14 Medium-Term Financial Plan, with departmental reserves projected to be in surplus by £81,000 and corporate reserves in surplus by £2.791 million. At the time of our meeting, latest projections were showing an improvement of £592,000, compared with the projected outturn that was used in the MTFP for 2011/15 and approved by Council on 3 March, 2011. The projected outturn saving is helpful however given the scale of our financial challenge the saving does not change our overall strategy for the MTFP approved in February.

Councillor Chris McEwan
Cabinet Member with Efficiency and Resources Portfolio