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**OVERVIEW OF RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Resource Management Portfolio :-
  - (a) **Commercial Street Site** – Following our previous decision in relation to the marketing of Council-owned land at Commercial Street and Kendrew Street, we have agreed to adopt a two stage selection process which will achieve the best scheme for the site and the best consideration for the Council’s land.
  - (b) **Morton Palms** – Practical completion of the two office buildings on plots 3 and 6 at Morton Palms has now taken place and the developer, City & Northern Limited, is in negotiations with potential occupiers. The developer is preparing proposals for the next phase of development and a planning application is expected shortly.
  - (c) **Consultation on Draft Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees** – Following the issue of the Government’s White Paper entitled ‘A Model Code of Conduct for Local Government Employees’, we have responded to the specific questions posed in the consultation document by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.
  - (d) **Organisational Development Strategy/Employee Survey** – We have received a very detailed report on the progress of the Organisational Development Strategy ‘Striving for Excellence’ and the results and analysis of the 2004 employee survey. Since the introduction of the ‘Striving for Excellence’ document, in 2001, a significant number of initiatives have been implemented in accordance with the respective frameworks, to embed the striving for excellence approach. In relation to the employee survey, it is pleasing to report that, at a corporate level, the results are again very good showing positive responses.
  - (e) **Prudential Indicators Update and Treasury Management Half-Year Review** – We have received an update of the Prudential Indicators and a half yearly review of the Council’s Treasury Management borrowing and investments activities.
  - (f) **Audit Services Annual Audit Plan 2004/05** – In accordance with Audit Services’ role and terms of reference, we have received a report on the progress of the Unit for the first seven months of the year. It is pleasing to report that the Council continues to operate within a control environment which is generally sound.
  
2. Other areas which might be of interest are :-

- (a) **Revenue Budget Management – Monthly Monitoring Report** – Each Director presented to Cabinet projected expenditure for the year compared with approved budgets.
- (b) **Capital Programme – Monthly Monitoring Report** – We have considered the current position of the spending and resource levels of the 2002/03 Capital Programme. The Capital Programme is on target with no significant variances.
- (c) **Discretionary Rate Relief** – In accordance with existing policy we have granted discretionary rate relief to a number of charitable and non-profit making organisations.
- (d) **Financial Assistance 2004/05** – A number of charitable and non-profit making organisations and individuals have been successful in receiving financial assistance.
- (e) **Schedule of Transactions** - A number of transactions, provisionally made by the Director of Development and Environment, have been approved.
- (f) **Redundant Toilet Block adjacent to 64 Morpeth Avenue** – In order to remove a potential liability from the Council’s Asset Register, to improve the visual appearance of the land and to meet a prospective purchasers request, we have agreed to dispose of the Council’s freehold interest in approximately 6.36 square metres of land adjacent to 64 Morpeth Avenue.

**Councillor Don Bristow**  
**Cabinet Member with Resource Management Portfolio**