
OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Since the last ordinary meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work undertaken by the Resources Scrutiny Committee :-

- (a) **Work Programme** – We have considered and updated our work programme.. One of the main pieces of work we will again be doing over the next year is in relation to budget monitoring and efficiencies. This work will be done through both the Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Budget Monitoring and Efficiency Review Group and we have set up regular meetings to undertake this.
- (b) **Annual Procurement Plan** – In accordance with Contract Procedure Rules, we have received information from Cabinet on those contracts which are deemed to be Strategic and those which can be delegated to Officers during the forthcoming year. It is proposed that more frequent reporting on contracts will be undertaken and we have asked for this information to be linked to the work we are continuing to undertake in relation to Capital Projects within the Authority.
- (c) **Workforce Information** – We have received key data in relation to the Council's workforce for the 2009/10 financial year. At the end of March 2010, the number of employees on the Council's payroll was 4919 (including school employees and those on casual and temporary contracts) which was a reduction of 88 employees since the end of the 2008/09 financial year. Expenditure in relation to agency work has been reduced by £906,974 during the 2009/10 financial year and this is partly due to the centralisation of this work into procurement, using preferred suppliers and preferential rates. We will continue to monitor workforce numbers and turnover over the next financial year.
- (d) **Sickness Absence** - It is pleasing to report that for the financial year 2009/10, the number of working days/shifts lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent was 8.46 days. This was 0.79 days below target and an improvement of one full day compared with the year end position in 2008/09. 34.7 per cent of employees had zero absence during the 2009/10 financial year. The positive results in this area are encouraging and have resulted from considerable Human Resource input and management actions and we have forwarded our congratulations to the Officers for the pro-active work undertaken.
- (e) **Provisional Revenue Out-turn 2009/10 and Revenue Budget Monitoring Update Quarter 1 2010/11** – We have received provisional out turn information for 2009/10, early budget management projections for 2010/11 together with a summary of the projected position at 31st March, 2011. The closing revenue reserves balance as at 31st March, 2010, is projected to be £12.109 million, which is an improvement of £549,000

compared with the 2010-14 MTFP and this overall projection is split between corporately managed and departmentally managed resources. In relation to early budget management projections, relatively few variances have been identified, although some pressures have been identified in Community and Children's Services Departments.

- (f) **Healthier Lives for Children and Young People Living in County Durham and Darlington – Housing and Council Tax Benefits Task and Finish Review** – We have approved the final report of the Housing and Council Tax Benefits Task and Finish Review Group. The work of the Review Group has been extremely worthwhile and, in conclusion, the Group reported that they were satisfied that the service was operating effectively and was working effectively with both its internal and external partners to ensure that families were getting their assessed entitlement within required timescales and reduce the effects of Child Poverty. This piece of work is part of a number of pieces of work being undertaken by all Scrutiny Committees in relation to the Director of Public Health's report entitled 'Healthier Lives for Children and Young People in County Durham and Darlington and the outcomes will be presented to the Director of Public Health at a special meeting of the Health and Well Being Scrutiny Committee being held on the 6th July, 2010.
 - (g) **Building Schools for the Future** – We have also had a briefing from the Director of Children's Services on the current position in relation to the Building Schools for the Future programme.
2. 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