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**OVERVIEW OF EFFICIENCY AND RESOURCES PORTFOLIO**

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1. Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under my Efficiency and Resources Portfolio.

**West Park Garden Village Development**

2. Working closely with Bussey and Armstrong Projects Limited, a Masterplan for West Park Garden Village has been prepared with the intention of it supporting a joint outline planning application for 1,200 homes in respect of the land at Stag House Farm and Mount Pleasant Farm. The preparation of the Masterplan will ensure good planning for the area and shape the vision and the environment by developing a cohesive scheme.

**Proposed Write-off of Irrecoverable Debts**

3. Cabinet has written-off sundry debtor invoices with individual values greater than £500 which are considered irrecoverable; this equates to 0.3 per cent of collectable debt, in which, during 2014/15, it has become apparent that no further practical or economical steps can be taken to recover the sums due. The Council works continually on debt collection to minimise loss of income by speeding up collection times and reducing the need for invoicing debt by maximising up-front payment for services wherever possible, however, there are some services which we are obliged to provide which cannot be withheld prior to payment.

**Insurance Contract Award**

4. Following a recent tender exercise the new Insurance Contract has been awarded to the incumbent Zurich Municipal who was the cheapest overall. Following an actuarial type review where Darlington's claim history and risk profiles were examined in detail, tenderers were asked to bid against increased excesses for employer and public liability insurance. This has resulted in lower premiums and savings against the Medium Term Financial Plan of £76,346 when taking into account the recommended increase we will be making to the insurance fund to cover any cost of claims.

**Sale of Site at Kellaw Road, Darlington**

5. Cabinet has agreed to dispose of its freehold reversionary interest in a plot of land adjacent to Kellaw Road which is currently occupied by National Window Systems Limited.

## **Land at Feethams and Houndgate**

6. Further to the report to Cabinet on 3 March 2015, the purchase of the parcel of land situated on the corner of Feethams and Houndgate by the Council has been completed.

## **ICT Update**

7. The following is an ICT Update covering April/May include ICT architecture programme continues and includes :-
  - (a) completion of implementation of Council-wide telephony system; and
  - (b) commencement of Wide Area Network roll-out.

**Councillor Stephen Harker**  
**Cabinet Member with Efficiency and Resources Portfolio**