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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.

**Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Reports 2016/17**

2. Cabinet has been provided with details of complaints, compliments and comments which have been received by the Council during 2016/17 under the Council's Corporate Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedure and those representations made under the Adult Social Care, Children's Social Care and the Public Health Complaints, Compliments and Comments Procedures.
3. In addition, Cabinet also agreed to amend the Council's Unreasonable and Unreasonably Persistent Complainants Procedure in view of the corporate arrangements introduced by the Employee Protection Register (EPR).

**Regulation of Investigatory Powers**

4. Cabinet has received an update on issues relevant to the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000 (RIPA), together with developments that have taken place since the last report to Cabinet in January 2017.
5. The Investigatory Powers Act 2016 received Royal Assent at the end of 2016, however, the majority of this has not yet come into force and Codes of Practice still need to be finalised. Training sessions for staff in service areas that use or may need to consider using RIPA were held in August and early September delivered by the Principal Lawyer (Litigation). In addition, all Management Teams, the designated Authorising Officers, and members of the Chief Officers Executive and the Chief Officers Board, have been receiving RIPA refresher training from the Assistant Director, Law and Governance this September.

**Write-off of Former Housing Tenant Arrears, Housing Benefits Overpayments, Non-Domestic Rates and Council Tax**

6. Cabinet has written off debts, subject to steps for recovery being taken, wherever possible, if and when contact is made in relation to former tenant arrears, Housing and Council Tax Benefit overpayments, Non-Domestic rates and Council Tax.

## **Xentrall Shared Services Annual Report 2016/17**

7. Xentrall Shared Services, the Stockton and Darlington partnership was established in 2008 and it now in its tenth year of the ten year agreement.
8. The original business case identified a number of efficiencies and benefits to be delivered resulting in initial savings of £7.4 million over the original ten-year period. The partnership has delivered all of these plus additional efficiencies and benefits and is now on target to make £13.6 million savings over the same ten-year period.
9. Both the quality and performance has improved over this period with both customer and staff satisfaction increasing.
10. In view of the success of the partnership, the Council has previously agreed to amend the ten-year period into an on-going rolling agreement.

## **Treasury Management Annual Report and Outturn Prudential Indicators 2016/17**

11. 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 and seeking approval of outturn Prudential Indicators for 2015/16 in accordance with the Prudential Code. The financial year 2016/17 has presented similar circumstances to 2015/16 with regard to treasury management and activity during 2016/17 has been carried out in accordance with Council policy and within legal limits.
12. Investments continue to be made only where there is low risk for the Council and this manifested itself in the continuing reliance on internal borrowing (reducing external investments and using the money to pay for capital expenditure rather than borrowing), which in turn has had a positive effect on the MTFP financing costs as investment rates are lower than borrowing rates.
13. Financing costs have been reduced during the year and a saving of £0.374 million achieved from the original Medium Term Financial Plan as a result of not providing the Minimum Revenue Provision due to over provision in previous years as reported in a previous Council report and a mixture of higher interest rates paid on a Lender Option Borrower Option (LOBO) debt and increased interest received from investments and reduced broker charges paid on new debt.

## **Project Position Statement and Capital Programme Monitoring Outturn 2016/17**

14. Cabinet has received information on the delivery of the Council's Capital Programme, together with the financial outturn position as at 31 March 2017, and the proposed financing of the 2016/17 capital expenditure.
15. The Council has a substantial annual construction programme of work, with the current project position statement showing that there are 29 live projects currently being managed with an overall project outturn value of £87.372 million. The majority of projects are running to time, cost and quality expectations with no

foreseeable issues.

### **Revenue Outturn 2016/17**

16. The Council's draft revenue position at the end of 2016/17 is £17.336 million, which is £0.639 million better than the initial 2017-18 MTFP position. The £0.639 million consists of an improvement of £0.417 million in departmental resources and an overall improvement in corporately managed resources of £0.222 million.
17. An additional £0.610 million was requested to be carried forward into 2017/18 to meet future commitments on top of the £1.135 million already approved. Whilst this improved position is welcome and helpful it does not change the financial context in which the Council is currently planning. The additional reserves of £0.639 million are welcome, particularly in the context of the significant savings required over the coming years.

### **Land**

18. Cabinet has agreed to the sale of the Council's freehold interest in approximately 1.6 acres of Council land to the north-west of the junction of Haughton Road and Barton Street.
19. Cabinet has acknowledged the termination of the tenancy at Baydale Farm and ancillary parcels of land and has agreed to their re-letting on terms to be negotiated.
20. Cabinet has also agreed to accept a surrender of the tenancy at Stag House Farm.

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