

**COUNCIL
5 DECEMBER, 2019**

OVERVIEW OF RESOURCES PORTFOLIO

Since the last meeting of Council, the following are the main areas of work under the Resources Portfolio

Sale of Four Riggs Car Park, Off Bondgate, Darlington

1. Cabinet has declared the Four Riggs Car Park, off Bondgate, as surplus to requirements.
2. For a number of years, the car park has been used for contract parking serving businesses on Bondgate and the surrounding area, however, it has been very much underused and there is sufficient alternative car parking provision nearby in the Upper Archer Street car park to meet that need. Enquiries have been received from two interested parties to acquire the land and terms of sale have been agreed with both parties.

Release of Capital Allocation

3. Cabinet has agreed to release funding allocated in the 2019-20 - 2022-23 capital programme to undertake Capitalised Repairs. The release of this funding will enable the toilets within Block D of the Town Hall to be refurbished and for essential remedial works to the roof and windows to be undertaken at The Bridge.

Investment Fund Update

4. In November 2016, the Council established an Investment fund to be used for innovative investment opportunities beyond the traditional Treasury Management Strategy in order to achieve greater returns given the low returns on investments.
5. The fund provision of £50 million is currently being utilised as envisaged in the original reports to Council to facilitate wide economic benefits as well as a direct positive impact on the Council's financial position. To date, the fund has been used for eight schemes and Council has agreed that once the funding has been repaid, the amount can be recycled back into the fund for future use.

Regulation of Investigatory Powers

6. Cabinet has received an update on the use of the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, which enables the Authority to carry out certain types of surveillance activity as long as specified procedures have been followed.

Review of Outcome of Complaints Made to the Ombudsman

7. Cabinet has been updated on the outcome of a number of cases which have been determined by the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman (LGSCO) and

the Housing Ombudsman (HO) in relation to Council's activities, together with the actions taken by the Council as a result of those outcomes.

Complaints, Compliments and Comments Annual Reports 2018/19

8. In relation to the Council's Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy, the Council has received a total of 825 complaints during 2018/19, a decrease from 871 complaints during 2017/18, an increase in compliments from 116 in 2017/18 to 280 in 2018/19 and a total of 240 comments, an increase from 224.

General Election

9. Staff in Democratic Services have been working hard to ensure that everything is in place for the General Election on the 12 December 2019. This has been a significant resource issue at a busy time generally.

Councillor Charles Johnson
Cabinet Member with Resources Portfolio