

Report of:	To:	Date	Item No.
Cllr. Alan Vincent, Resources Portfolio Holder	Council	28 November 2013	8(b)

EXECUTIVE REPORT: RESOURCES PORTFOLIO HOLDER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform Council of progress on key objectives and the current position on issues within the Resources Portfolio, as set out below.

2. Finance

- 2.1 The budget preparation for 2014/15 is progressing well. Unusually, there have been no new capital growth bids for the next financial year but, Members will be aware, that a report concerning the Beach Bungalows at Fleetwood will be considered as soon as the relevant information has been collected and that a feasibility study is currently being undertaken by the Strategic Energy Group following comments from the Budget Scrutiny Group last year. This concerned a bid for Fleetwood Market roof repairs and their recommendation that the bid be 'Deferred – pending the investigation of whether the installation of solar panels, and in effect the rental of the roof to an energy provider, would provide sufficient income to fund the investment.' The updated capital programme following the 3rd quarter review (as at 31 December 2013) will be presented to the Cabinet meeting 15 January 2014.
- 2.2 The Portfolio Holder's proposals for any increases in fees and charges have been considered by the Budget Scrutiny Group and individual Portfolio Holders have been presented with relevant feedback which has assisted them in making their recommendations.
- 2.3 Members will recall that a key pressure for the 2014/15 financial year and beyond is the triennial actuarial review of the Pension Fund and the determination of the superannuation rate for the 3 years commencing April 2014. The Council has recently been notified of a proposed contribution rate of 27.5% of pay which accords with the assumption contained within the Medium Term Financial Plan. Whilst this is good news, in that the cost can be contained within the provision allowed for in the financial forecast (£157,000), we were hoping that the actual rate may be lower than the projection giving us a little room for manoeuvre.

2.4 Whilst the Government has already provided some indicative figures as part of its technical consultation on the Local Government Finance Settlement for 2014/15 and 2015/16, the Council anxiously awaits confirmation of the future funding levels, which is expected sometime in December.

3. Human Resources

3.1 A series of Investor in People workshops have taken place during the month of November. Three main representative groups of employees were identified, namely third tier managers, employees with more than 20 years' service and employees who are members of the staff focus group. All employees who fall into one of these categories have been invited to take part in the appropriate workshop. A fourth workshop has also been arranged to allow any employees who have not been selected in the representative groups to take part, if they so wish.

3.2 A staff satisfaction survey was circulated to employees during the month of October which covered a variety of topics including communication, management style and staff training. The results from this will be collated and compared to those from the previous survey, undertaken some two years ago, before being presented to the Corporate Management Team. Areas identified as requiring attention will form the basis of an improvement/action plan.

4. Procurement

4.1 The suppliers day event held at the Thornton Little Theatre for the leisure centre improvement works was very successful, with 63 attendees, many of whom were representing local businesses and traders.

5. Asset Management

5.1 An update report was presented to the Cabinet meeting 23 October to which I have nothing further to add. I wish to let Members know, however, that in accordance with the legislation supporting the Community Right to Bid, the Council has received a request from a Community Interest Company (Fleetwood Plus) to nominate the Mount Methodist Church to be listed as an asset of community value. An item later on tonight's agenda seeks to amend the Council's Scheme of Delegation to enable new procedures for dealing with such requests to be implemented. It is worth noting that the aim of the Community Right to Bid is to give local community groups a fairer chance to make a bid to buy local assets on the open market, but does not confer a right to buy or a right of first refusal. It merely introduces, in certain circumstances, a moratorium on disposal of the asset.

6. Comments and Questions

6.1 In accordance with procedure rule 11.3 any member of Council will be able to ask me a question or make a comment on the contents of my report or on any issue, which falls within my area of responsibility. I will respond to any such questions or comments in accordance with Procedure Rule 11.5.