

Title of Report: **Actions from Resource Management Select Committee Minutes**

Report to be considered by: Resource Management Working Group

Date of Meeting: 26 July 2011

Purpose of Report: To receive an update on actions following the last meeting of the Resource Management Select Committee.

Recommended Action: To note the update.

Key background documentation: Minutes of the Resource Management Select Committee held on 15 March 2011.

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Executive Report

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report provides the information requested at the last meeting of the Resource Management Select Committee. The full detail is contained within the minutes from last time.

2. Item 51 – Actions from previous Minutes

Economic Development Officer

- 2.1 It was queried whether the business sector had been notified of the loss of the Economic Development Officer post. While this did not form part of a business rate payers consultation, organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses were advised and given a new central contact point. A large majority of the work previously undertaken by a single member of staff has been distributed between a number of officers in Policy and Communication and is co-ordinated by David Lowe, the Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager.

Youth Service

- 2.2 Clarity was sought on the point made in the report that there would be a greater focus on work with young people rather than the wider community. This is clarified in the following paragraph as being a greater emphasis on work with vulnerable groups of young people. This replaces paragraph 4.1 (2) in the original report:

- (1) With a shift towards a greater focus on Youth Services working with vulnerable groups of young people, rather than the wider community, income levels have been consistently hard to attain. In future, the Youth Service will be increasingly engaging in work with smaller groups of young people such as those engaged in Youth Offending, having Special Educational Needs or Looked After Children. This requires a more intensive type of work with smaller groups of young people and as a consequence the ability to generate income will further reduce.

West Street House and West Point Maintenance Budgets

- 2.3 This information is provided in a separate report shown at Appendix 1.

Travel Tokens

- 2.4 Information was requested by Members on the uptake of travel tokens from disabled residents and the following information has been provided by the Head of Highways and Transport (this is based on the position in March 2011):

- (1) The forecasted underspend for the 2010/11 financial year is a direct result of a less than planned uptake of Travel Tokens by disabled residents and a lower rate of reimbursements to bus operators for residents using the Free Bus Travel Pass.

- (2) To put this into context, there was a change in policy commencing at the start of the 2009/10 scheme year, whereby Travel Tokens would only be given to disabled residents and the over 60's would only receive the statutory Free Bus Travel Pass.
- (3) At the time that this change in policy was being considered, just over 26,000 residents were receiving a travel concession (16,000 Travel Tokens and 10,000 Free Bus Travel Passes). The figures as at March 2011 were 2,030 Travel Tokens and 20,113 Free Bus Travel Passes.
- (4) The low uptake in applications from disabled residents for Travel Tokens is on face value surprising, especially as those in receipt of disabled blue badge parking permits, of which there are approximately 5,000, would generally qualify automatically for Travel Tokens. It appears that the eligibility criteria for determining disability is far more stringent for Concessionary Travel than Parking Permits where it is understood an element of "self certification" applies. Although the number of Free Bus Travel Passes in circulation has doubled, residents are simply not using local bus services to the extent that was envisaged.
- (5) When preparing the 2010/11 budgets, a sensible view was made on the likely number of applications from disabled residents for Travel Tokens as well as how many journeys would be undertaken by Bus Pass holders. It would have been simple to get this wrong with the result that we could have been looking at a similar size budget pressure rather than a saving.

Establishment Report

- 2.5 The recommendation that this report includes a year end projection for both Council and joint/externally funded posts was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission at its meeting on 9 June 2011. It has therefore been forwarded to the Executive for consideration.

3. Item 52 – Car Park Budgets

- 3.1 The information requested for this item has been provided by the Head of Highways and Transport and is contained within Appendices 2 and 3. This information is confidential and is therefore Part 2.

4. Item 53 – Connectivity and Usage of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG)

- 4.1 The recommendation requesting that a project plan be produced that will enable all the Council's systems to be compliant with the LLPG was agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Commission at its meeting on 9 June 2011. It has therefore been forwarded to the Executive for consideration.

Appendices

- Appendix 1 Resource Management Select Committee Minutes; 15 March 2011
- Appendix 2 Maintenance provision for West Street House and West Point
- Appendix 3 Car parking information including enforcement (Part 2)
- Appendix 4 Car parking cost breakdown (Part 2)