



Title	Value for Money Conclusion/Use of Resources
For further information about this report please contact	Mike Snow
Service Area	Finance
Wards of the District directly affected	N/A
Is the report private and confidential and not for publication by virtue of a paragraph of schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, following the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006	No
Date and meeting when issue was last considered and relevant minute number	Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee 13 th April 2010
Background Papers	

Contrary to the policy framework:	No
Contrary to the budgetary framework:	No
Key Decision?	No
Included within the Forward Plan? (If yes include reference number)	No

Officer/Councillor Approval

With regard to officer approval all reports *must* be approved by the report author's relevant Deputy Chief Executive, Finance, Legal Services and the relevant Portfolio Holder(s).

Officer Approval		Name
Deputy Chief Executive	12/07/10	Andy Jones
Chief Executive		Chris Elliott
CMT		
Section 151 Officer		Mike Snow
Legal		
Finance		Mike Snow
Portfolio Holder(s)		Andrew Mobbs

Consultation Undertaken

Please insert details of any consultation undertaken with regard to this report.

Final Decision?	Yes/No
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Suggested next steps (if not final decision please set out below)

1. **SUMMARY**

- 1.1 The Council has agreed that the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee should monitor progress on the Use of Resources Action Plan. This report provides an update to the Action Plan. It also updates members on the changes to Use of Resources and the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 That the Finance and Audit Scrutiny Committee note the on-going progress on the Use of Resources Action Plan, and a further report is brought to the October meeting.

3. **REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 The Council received a score of "2" in its 2008/09 Use of Resources assessment. The assessment did suggest areas where improvements could be made. The Use of Resources Action Plan is to assist with monitoring these improvements.

4. **ALTERNATIVE OPTION CONSIDERED**

- 4.1 No alternative options are proposed.

5. **BUDGETARY FRAMEWORK**

- 5.1 All the issues within the Use of Resources Action plan should be carried out within existing budgets.
- 5.2 The Council needs to ensure that it does make the best "use of its resources" in all ways. This will assist it to be able to provide quality services during the difficult times forecast ahead with regard to its overall level of finances.

6. **POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- 6.1 By managing the Council's resources properly this will support the Council in achieving its corporate objectives.

7. **BACKGROUND**

- 7.1 The Use of Resources is an Audit Commission assessment of how well organisations are managing and using their resources to deliver value for money and better and sustainable outcomes for local people. The Use of Resources Assessment has been a key component of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (and formally the Comprehensive Performance Assessment). The assessment is very broad, covering most aspects of the Council's business. This includes areas such as managing its finances, governance arrangements, internal control, risk, and procurement. Most of the Council's policies and strategies contribute directly or indirectly to the issues considered as part of the Use of Resources assessment, with it being extremely comprehensive.
- 7.2 In January/February of this year the Audit Commission undertook work on the Council's 2009/10 Use of Resources Assessment. A draft report had been produced and discussed with officers. This was due to be presented to this Committee. In May the new Government announced that all work on the

Comprehensive Area Assessment, including Use of Resources will cease (Letter in Appendix 1). Accordingly the Use of Resources Report will not be formally issued to the Council.

- 7.3 The auditors are required to issue a Value For Money (VFM) Conclusion as part of their consideration of the Council's Statement of Accounts. In recent years, this assessment has been by way of the Use of Resources. As the Council had virtually concluded the 2010 Use of Resources assessment, this work has been used for the VFM Conclusion. This is included in the attached report from the Audit Commission (Appendix 2). Representatives of the Audit Commission will be attending the meeting to discuss this document and the finding therein.
- 7.4 Whilst Use of Resources may have formally ceased, it is acknowledged that work should continue in seeking to improve in the areas raised in the Use of Resources assessment. Accordingly, the Use of Resources Action Plan is still in place. This has been updated to reflect the issues coming out of the Value For Money Conclusion, the updated document being Appendix 3.
- 7.5 The Audit Commission are reviewing the approach that auditors will take in future to the value for money conclusion from 2010/11.