

STOCKTON-ON-TEES BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET RECOMMENDATIONS

PROFORMA

Cabinet Meeting17th December 2009

1. Title of Item/Report

Efficiency, Improvement, and Transformation (EIT) Review of Highways, Lighting and Network Management

2. Record of the Decision

Consideration was given to a report that presented Cabinet with the findings of the gateway EIT review on Highways, Lighting and Network Management which was undertaken by an Officer team and reported into Arts, Leisure and Culture Select Committee.

This review built upon the work completed by the Regeneration & Transport Select Committee which was approved by Cabinet on 4 January 2007 and formed part of a three year programme of EIT (Efficiency, Improvement and Transformation) reviews covering all services provided by the Council. The programme aimed to ensure that all services were reviewed in a systematic way to ensure that they were provided in the most efficient manner, provided value for money and identified opportunities for service improvements and transformation.

The review covered Highways and Network Management but the main focus, given the timescales, was centred on street lighting operations. There were two reasons for this, firstly, the announcement of a new round of PFI credits for street lighting renewal during the review period had to channel resources into the evaluation of whether or not to pursue with an expression of interest. Secondly, early baseline work identified that there were significant annual revenue savings to be gained by changing the way the Council procured and delivered its street lighting energy and maintenance.

The review areas relating to highway improvement works identified some opportunities to improve current working arrangements, however the savings associated with these, although valuable, were related to capital expenditure not Council Revenue. Some further work was required to consider how these could be taken forward. This also included some analysis of the Highway Inspection function, and how this linked to the recent Network Management Duty, needed to be reviewed.

The Arts, Leisure & Culture Select Committee played a crucial role in reviewing the baseline and options stages of this review, providing challenge to the review team at each stage.

RESOLVED that

- 1 The Council pursue the application for PFI Credits and, if successful, procure a private finance operator to deliver a street lighting replacement and maintenance programme.
- 2 If the Council were not successful with the application for PFI credits, further consideration would be given to bring the street lighting service in-house to deliver expected efficiencies.
- 3 Detailed exploration of partnership working with other Tees Valley Authorities be closely considered in line with recommendation 2 above.
- 4 Funding mechanisms be considered through prudential borrowing or capital investment to bring forward the replacement of obsolete column stock, delivering a revenue energy and maintenance saving in line with recommendation 2 above.
- 5 Decommissioning of lit road signs and bollards, replaced with reflective equipment to provide a revenue energy saving.
- 6 Further work be undertaken, in line with the commercial service EIT review to ensure that highway improvement works can be delivered in house on a commercial basis, to reduce the need to have to appoint delivery partners for capital highway works.
- 7 Further work be undertaken to look at strengthening the links between the Network Management Duty and the Highway Inspection Service, currently delivered by Care for Your Area.
- 8 Bus shelter maintenance budget to be transferred to Direct Services from 2010/11.
- 9 Highways related consultation be delivered through an electronic mechanism utilising internet and email communication where residents and customers are prepared to engage.

3. Reasons for the Decision

To improve the management and maintenance of the Council's highway and street lighting assets whilst seeking to achieve service efficiencies.

4. Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

None

5. Declared (Cabinet Member) Conflicts of Interest

None

6. Details of any Dispensations

Not applicable

7. Date and Time by which Call In must be executed

Not later than Midnight on Tuesday 29th December 2009

Proper Officer
21 December 2009