
EXCERPT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE RESOURCES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 JULY 2004

CROS.103/04 PROVISIONAL CAPITAL OUTTURN AND CAPITAL DETERMINATIONS 2003/04 AND REVISED CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2004/05

The Head of Finance presented report FS.12/04 summarising the 2003/04 provisional outturn for the Council's capital programme, summarising the capital determinations for 2003/04 as required by legislation and providing details of the revised capital programme for 2004/05.

In considering the matter Members raised the following issues:

1. Note 1 on page 7 of the report explained that the PRTB sharing agreement with Carlisle Housing Association (CHA) had generated a significant receipt in 2003/04. For the purposes of the report the receipts received had been used to finance the 2004/05 programme on the basis that the schemes to which capital receipts funding had been applied would meet the definition of creating sustainable communities.

Concern was expressed at the apparent wide definition of "sustainable communities" and that the receipts may be used for inappropriate purposes. Members strongly believed that a moral argument existed for the monies to be targetted to areas of most need and to fulfill the Council's housing role. In addition, a strict audit of the use thereof should be undertaken.

In response, Mrs Brown advised that the Council had received as much guidance as was to be provided from the ODPM and that it was their wording which had been used within the report. She took on board the above comments, but there was a need to ensure that the Council was not too tightly constrained in the use of those receipts.

2. Members referred to the current rate of Right to Buy sales which would in future seriously restrict CHA's ability to provide for the homeless. They stressed that action required to be taken to address that problem. Projects existed in other areas of the country to provide a range of supported housing and should be investigated.

In response, the Head of Environmental Protection advised that capital investment in housing would come before Members as part of a future report. The above was a valid point and would be taken on board as part of the overall Housing Strategy for the Council.

3. A Member expressed concern at the current state of the Council's Hostels and the provision being made for homeless persons, those who had suffered domestic

abuse, etc. Those were the most vulnerable people within our society and the Council had a moral obligation to provide for them.

It was agreed that the above concern be forwarded to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee for consideration at its August meeting.

Ms Mooney (Executive Director) advised that the Housing Strategy would include the action to be taken over the next four/five years as regards the development of housing and response to community needs. There was a need to ensure that the funding was in place to do it and an options report, including all comments received, would be submitted to the Executive.

RESOLVED – (1) That the report be noted.

(2) That the comments outlined at points 1. – 3. above be forwarded to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Executive.