

Statement by the Cabinet Member for Partnerships

20 September 2011

Managed workspace

Commercial workspace is 100% let whilst office space is at 45% occupancy versus our current 60% target. This is largely due to 23 vacant units at Evolution. Officers are working up an idea to provide free access to new start ups to minimise our unoccupied business rate obligation. Our current expectation is for a £40k year end shortfall on budget.

The Jacobs study which includes the whole council estate (funded with RIEP monies) is imminent and will give us clearer strategic direction.

Tourism

Thirsk TIC officially opened on 24 August

WOJH has a new interim manager in place and the Shadow Trust Board has agreed a 20 point marketing plan to redress the drop off in visitor numbers and income. Officers expect that there will be no requirement to increase the agreed maximum £60k council subsidy.

Markets

Scrutiny have been asked to conduct a review of our Market offer in order to keep it fresh and on budget.

Building Control Partnership

Work continues to recruit new local authority partners and expand services offered. In particular it is hoped that Harrogate may be encouraged to join. With the drop off in building work owing to the downturn it is expected that there may be a £40k budget deficit if no new authorities join the partnership.

CCTV

Operating costs currently exceed profile but will not impact the year end budget.

Seven of the eight public conveniences have now either transferred or agreed to transfer and negotiations are continuing with Northallerton Town Council over the Applegarth Toilets. Owing to refurbishment works prior to transfer the maintenance budget is overspent and Cabinet has agreed to support this from the Service Improvement Reserve.

We are exploring the transfer of some footway lighting to public bodies.

Discussions on the transfer of Northallerton Forum continue positively.

Councillor Nigel Clack
Cabinet Member for Partnerships