

## **Resources Panel – Report from Councillor Stephen Castle (Chairman)**

1. Liberata currently provides Finance, Human Resources, ICT Facilities and Print and Design services to the LGA. In November 2012, the Resources Panel agreed to a fundamental renegotiation of the Liberata contract subject to savings in the region of £5 million being achieved over the remaining five years of the contract. The contract has now been renegotiated in line with the steer given by the Resources Panel. To achieve this, Liberata are making some service changes, and also introducing incentives for the LGA to reduce costs in a number of areas, moving away from the original fixed-price nature of the contract. The Resources Panel will continue to monitor progress with the contract and in particular, progress with delivering the agreed savings.
2. The Panel reviewed the LGA's medium-term financial strategy and final proposals for the 2013/14 budget, for recommendation to March Executive. Reductions in the cost of the Liberata contract mean that the LGA has a stand-still budget for next year in spite of reductions in subscription income and also Revenue Support Grant topslice. Securing a balanced budget in 2013/14 will therefore be challenging but achievable.
3. The Panel reviewed the LGA's performance against the current year's business plan for the third quarter, including financial performance. On current projections the LGA is expected to manage within its resources in 2012/13 including the one-off costs associated with the Liberata changes.
4. Members reviewed progress with ICT at the LGA and noted that progress has been made in improving the LGA's governance arrangements in this area, and that an ICT strategy for the LGA has now been agreed.
5. Members received a report on progress with the LGA's internal audit programme for 2012/13. "Substantial assurance" audit opinions have been provided for Procurement and Human Resources, and an "adequate assurance" opinion for Income Generating Activities, where action is being taken to implement the internal auditor's recommendations.

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