



DRAFT - Report to Cabinet

Subject Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Use of Resources Assessment

Date 11th July 2005

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Notification has recently been received from the Audit Commission that they have now published (under the heading 'CPA – the harder test') the new framework for comprehensive performance assessment of single tier and County Councils from 2005 to 2008. They have concluded, however, that more work is required in order to develop the detail for the future CPA framework for District Councils and they intend to undertake a national consultation exercise from the end of July 2005. They accordingly expect to develop the framework over the course of this year and to publish the final framework for this early in 2006.

At the same time, the Audit Commission published their final arrangements for the new 'Use of Resources Assessment' which will be carried out annually by the District Auditor. Attached as an appendix to this report is a copy of the guidance which the Commission has published with regard to this assessment.

As Members will see, the District Auditor will make judgments under a number of themes, including the extent to which a Council is effective in securing value for money. With regard to the value for money judgment, the Council will be required to undertake a self-assessment to inform the District Auditor's judgment. For single tier and County Councils the self-assessment has to be completed by the end of July and results of the overall use of Resources Assessment will be reported by the Audit Commission in Mid-December. With regard to District Councils such as ourselves, the self-assessment has to be completed by the end of September and the Audit Commission will report on its results at the end of March 2006.

Members will note from the guidance that this new assessment is intended to be significantly more testing for Councils than the old auditor judgments used in the comprehensive performance assessment of District councils. Members will recollect that we scored very highly in this in the CPA – we scored 4 ("good") in every category apart from one, where we scored a 3 ("adequate"). Having looked at the documentation for the new use of resources assessment, however, it is clear that, certainly in the first year, we will find it very difficult to achieve a score above 2 – which, as will be seen from the introduction to the guidance, is

considered to be 'at only minimum requirements – adequate performance'. Whilst we believe that it will be possible for us to work to achieve a 3 in future years, this will require some significant effort.

Inevitably, merely undertaking the self assessment and gathering together the evidence required to support that self assessment will take substantial officer time. It is important, however, that we do what we can to secure a use of resources assessment which is a fair reflection of what we believe to be the quality of arrangements in place here at Gedling and that the Council is not undersold. Officers will, accordingly, be working over the summer to complete the self-assessment and to ensure that the arrangements we have in place are sufficient at least to secure a score of 2.

For the future, we will consider what developments are required to be put in place in order to demonstrate an upward direction of travel, secure a higher score and improve our chances of doing well in our next CPA.

Members are asked to note this report.