



- (1) That the actual 2007/08 prudential indicators be approved.
- (2) That the treasury management stewardship report for 2007/08 be received.

**70 MORTGAGE INTEREST RATE**

The Lead Member for Resources, Councillor GK Robinson, presented a report seeking approval of the local average rate for the six months from 1 October 2008 to 31 March 2009. The Council is required to review its mortgage interest rate at six monthly intervals. The Council currently has four mortgage loans outstanding totalling £13,970.72 at 31 July 2008 which are repayable at variable rates of interest. The final loan is expected to be redeemed in 2015 unless repaid early. The cost of borrowing for the period 1 April 2008 to 30 September 2008 was estimated at 4.3% and the average local rate was therefore set at 4.55%. This was lower than the Standard National Rate which became 6.89% with effect from 12 February 2007 and the Standard National Rate was therefore applied. It is anticipated that the cost of the Council's external borrowing will remain at 4.3% for the next six months, resulting in an average local rate of 4.55%. The Standard National Rate currently remains at 6.89%; as this is higher than the average local rate it will be applicable for this period.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) The average local rate of 4.55% be approved for the period 1 October 2008 to 31 March 2009.
- (2) The interest rate for mortgages be set at the Standard National Rate of 6.89% for that period.

**71 ENERGY MANAGEMENT ANNUAL REPORT 2007/08**

The Lead Member for Resources, Cllr GK Robinson, presented a report which provided members with details of the Council's use of energy for the period 2007/08. Gas and Water consumption had increased slightly, whilst electricity consumption showed a slight decrease. Increased electricity and gas costs meant an increase in £4,800 (4.07%)

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the Energy Management Annual Report (2007/08) be approved.

**72 PLANNING COMMITTEE SITE VISITS PROTOCOL**

The Lead Member for Environment, Councillor O Hedley, presented a report which set out a proposed revised protocol for Members of the Planning Committee when carrying out site visits. The draft protocol was recommended for approval at the Planning Committee at its meeting on 3 September 2008.

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the revised Site Visit Protocol be approved
- (2) That an updated Planning Code of Practice be submitted to the next meeting of this committee.

**73 COUNTY DURHAM JOINT STRATEGIC NEEDS ASSESSMENT (JSNA)**

The Lead Member for Health & Safer Communities, Councillor KW Stansfield, presented a report which informed members of the recent public consultation exercise undertaken by Durham County Council and County Durham Primary Care Trust on the draft of the first County Durham Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). This is a key strategic document for

the County that identifies current and future health and wellbeing needs. A copy of the Summary Consultation document was attached to the report.

**RESOLVED:**

That no objections or amendments be made to the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment.

**74 IMPROVEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY: IMPROVEMENT SUPPORT PHASE 5**

The Deputy Leader of the Council, Councillor EM Walton presented a report which informed members of a proposal, from the Improvement and Development Agency, for support to the Council during the remainder of this financial year

**RESOLVED:**

- (1) That the offer of support, as outlined, for Council employees in the lead up to local government reorganisation be welcomed
- (2) That the offer of support to members of the Executive and Overview & Scrutiny Committees be declined, due to the limited time remaining for the Council prior to local government reorganisation.

**75 FORWARD PLAN**

The Committee considered the current forward plan

**RESOLVED:**

That the forward plan be noted.

The Meeting closed at 2.15pm.

**CHAIRMAN**

MD/GR