

AGENDA ITEM 11

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

11 JANUARY 2011

**SUMMARY OF THE
ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL'S
FINAL REPORT ON PROPERTY SERVICES**

Why the Scrutiny Panel Examined This Subject:

1. Streetscene's Property Services function is the Council's in-house direct service provider for building works, cleaning, maintenance and security in respect of over 200 Council buildings.
2. The scrutiny panel sought to investigate Property Services' operation and role and the range of services it provides. Of particular interest to the scrutiny panel were working arrangements with Mouchel and the potential impact of the Council's difficult budget position.

The Scrutiny Panel's Conclusions:

3. The scrutiny panel's conclusions are summarised below. The conclusions are shown in full in the **attached final report** and highlight the following:
 - 1) Property Services is a trading organisation, reliant on income generation, with rates set in competition with the private sector. The service is a major employer of lower paid local workers.
 - 2) The amount of internal and external work secured in competition illustrates that standards of work are high and that costs are competitive. However, services are not generally widely marketed.
 - 3) The Council's difficult financial position raises possible issues concerning future Property Services budget holding arrangements.
 - 4) The bureaucratic administrative process associated with undertaking building repairs and the forthcoming transfer of some functions back to Property Services from Mouchel.

The Scrutiny Panel's Recommendations:

4. The scrutiny panel's recommendations are summarised below. The recommendations are shown in full in the **attached final report** and highlight the following:

- 1) The need to carefully consider the future budget holding position concerning Property Services - including examining the advantages and disadvantages of the differing approaches and the implications for Property Services.
- 2) The possibility of advertising and marketing the services available from Property service.
- 3) The opportunity to review and rationalise the administrative system associated with repairs and maintenance of Council buildings following the forthcoming transfer of some Property Services functions back to Middlesbrough Council from Mouchel.

COUNCILLOR BOB KERR

CHAIR OF THE ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY PANEL