

Committee: Finance and Administration
Date: 27 November 2008
Title: Lead Officer's report
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Agenda Item

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Item for
information

Summary

This report updates Members on matters arising from the minutes that are not otherwise on this Agenda and other items of interest.

Recommendations

That the report is noted.

Background Papers

None

Situation/Update

Member training

Training for Members took place during October 2008 and were reasonably well attended. The training delivered was:

- An Introduction to Local Government Finance for Elected Members
- Effective Budget Scrutiny – Adding Value to the Budget Setting Process

Further training is planned from May and June 2009 around the year end closedown process.

The Lodge House

Officers are currently exploring opportunities around the retention or disposal of the Lodge House at Saffron Walden. One option currently being considered is the disposal of the house and use of the money to pay off the lease for the toilets at The Common and Swan Meadow in Saffron Walden and at Stansted. If this went ahead annual revenue savings of £75,000 could be achieved.

Procurement Cards

Officers are currently looking to implement procurement cards as a means to save time and money in the purchasing process. The use of the cards will also speed up payment to businesses where the cards are used. The cards would have single transaction and monthly limits per member of staff. The cards are visa cards and would enable selected officers to purchase goods and services up to a set value without the need to raise an order and code and process the subsequent invoice. It has been calculated by the National Audit Office that the cost of this element of the process equates to £28 per order and that 75% of invoices processed could be replaced by the visa card.

This initiative would be delivered under the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) framework agreement for Government Procurement Cards which is open to all of central and local government to access.

There are six potential visa card suppliers under the agreement and the final choice will depend upon value and also the ability to integrate the procurement card system with our finance system to speed up further the whole process.

Further details can be viewed at <http://www.purchasingcard.info/>

Summary Accounts 2007/08

Officers are currently preparing a summary set of accounts for 2007/08 for publication on the website. There will also be paper copies available at the UConnect Centres. An update on progress will be given at the meeting.