

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Corporate Affairs Committee was held on 31 May 2006.

PRESENT: Councillor Clark (Chair), Councillors Elder, J A Jones, McPartland and Porley.

OFFICIALS: J Bennington, C Davies, R G Long, R Painter and P Slocombe.

**** APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were submitted on behalf of Councillors Mawston and Mrs H Pearson.

**** DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this point of the meeting.

**** MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Affairs Committee held on 19 April 2006 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

STATEMENT OF INTERNAL CONTROL 2005/2006

In a report of the Director of Resources approval was sought to the Statement of Internal Control (SIC) 2005/2006 which was a statutory document required to be included with the final accounts.

The statement was intended to provide adequate assurance that the Council had a sound system of internal control, designed to help manage and control business risk. It was considered to be an important statement of what the Council had put in place in respect of good business practice, high standards of conduct and sound governance.

In addition to satisfying the requirements of the Accounts and Audit Regulations, the SIC was a key measure of the overall effectiveness of the Authority.

It was confirmed that the SIC had been compiled following a review of the effectiveness of the Council's systems of internal control by senior Officers and demonstrated an improvement on the previous year's statement.

The report outlined the improvements, which had been made to the control environment within the Council during 2005/06.

Specific reference was made to the 'Significant Internal Control Issues', which had been raised in the 2004/2005 statement and the actions taken during 2005/2006 to address them.

Reference was made to the following areas of concern which arose during 2005/06 which had been highlighted along with the action plans in place to address them in respect of the following:-

- a) Housing Bureau relating to control processes applied to training/trainers and the appropriate type and level of checking;
- b) Home Improvement Grants – processes and procedures;
- c) Goods Receipting Control Account – control and reconciliation procedures.

ORDERED as follows: -

1. That the Statement of Internal Control 2005/2006 be approved.
2. That the information provided in particular the reported internal control issues' section within the Statement and summarised in paragraph 10 of the report submitted be noted.

3. That the respective Officers be thanked for the work undertaken resulting in an improved Statement from the previous year.

SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES – LOCAL AUTHORITY SCHOOL GOVERNORS – APPOINTMENTS

A report of the Head of Education Policy and Resources was presented regarding vacancies for Local Authority appointed School Governors which had arisen as a result of resignations, the expiry of terms of office or the removal of Governors due to non-attendance.

It was noted that there were currently 16 vacancies out of a total of 142 Governorships for LEA representatives, which equated to 11%

In view of the forthcoming changes to Governing Body constitutional arrangements whereby the number of LEA Governors on each Governing Body was likely to reduce it was suggested that consideration be given to ensuring that there was adequate LEA representation on all Governing Bodies.

The nominations received for such vacancies were outlined in Appendix 1 of the report submitted and in an updated report circulated at the meeting.

ORDERED as follows:

1. That the following appointments be approved for a four-year term of office with effect from 1 June 2006: -

<u>School</u>	<u>Governor</u>
Archibald Primary	Mr R Peacock
Chandlers Ridge Primary	Mrs L Tomlinson
Green Lane Primary	Mrs B Hadfield
Lingfield Primary	Mr G Moor
Newham Bridge Primary	Mrs L Lawrence
North Ormesby Primary	Miss S Hartley
Park End Primary	Dr M Simpson, Mrs C McColgan
Pennyman Primary	Mrs R Charles
Rose Wood Primary	Mrs C Watt
St Gerard's R C Primary	Mr G Wijesinghe
Hall Garth Secondary	Mr P J Smith
Tollesby School	Mr P Beveridge.

2. That following the reconstitution of the Governing Bodies the undermentioned appointments be approved for a four-year term of office with effect from 1 June 2006: -

<u>School</u>	<u>Governor</u>
The Newlands FCJ	Mr L J Herbst
St. David's RC Technology College	Councillor B Taylor.

3. That appointments to the following vacancies be deferred pending the receipt of nominations in respect of:

Berwick Hills Primary School

Brambles Primary School

King's Manor School.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS

The Director of Legal and Democratic Services submitted a report regarding proposed election fees to be paid at Council, Mayoral and Parish elections in Middlesbrough as outlined in the Appendix to the report submitted.

The Committee was advised of problems recruiting sufficient staff to work on elections especially during recent years. In discussing the potential problems of recruitment, the Committee suggested that the possibility of providing some form of transport for staff on election night be examined.

It was noted that the impact of a significant increase in the number of requests for postal votes and the number and location of polling stations would be the subject of a report to a subsequent meeting of the Committee.

ORDERED that the proposed increased election fees as outlined in the report submitted be approved.