

CORPORATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Corporate Affairs Committee was held on 27 June 2007.

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

OFFICIALS: B Baldam, J Bennington, D Clemmet, C Davies, R G Long, K E Robinson and P Slocombe.

PRESENT BY INVITATION: Audit Commission:
S Reeve (Principal Auditor) and R Walker (Audit Manager).

**** 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 8 June 2007 were submitted and approved as a correct record.

STRATEGIC PLAN – ANNUAL UPDATE 2007/2008

The Corporate Performance Manager submitted a report in respect of the Strategic Plan Annual Update 2007/2008 which required the Council's approval by the end of June 2007. Members were advised that the Committee had delegated powers to consider matters of urgency and approve the Plan on behalf of the Council.

Under the new CPA methodology, the Council had achieved a 4-star rating in December 2005 which enabled the Council to retain flexibility regarding how it addressed the Best Value Performance Plan requirements.

In 2006, the Council decided to replace its Corporate Performance Plan with a three-year Strategic Plan that articulated the Council's medium-term priorities as well as providing details on the improvement activities to be undertaken within the following year.

The Strategic Plan incorporated the Council's statutory requirements in relation to producing a Best Value Performance Plan and also included local requirements to strengthen the alignment between performance and budget planning.

The Strategic Plan was structured in three parts as follows:-

Part 1 'Corporate Overview' – the Council's long-term vision and medium term priorities;
Part 11 'Achievements and Future Actions' – reflected the Council's performance and included the actions proposed for the current year;
Part 111 'Supporting Documentation' – detailed performance and budget information.

The Deputy Mayor had approved the proposed format and content of the Strategic Plan on 7 March 2007. The original three-part structure of the Plan would be retained for the annual update with only Parts 11 and 111 to be amended and reprinted.

Following consideration of the draft Strategic Plan Annual Update 2007/08 the feedback from CMT, Executive, Overview and Scrutiny Board, Scrutiny Panels, Local Strategic Partnership Board and service areas had been incorporated into the final draft version of the Plan. The Council's priorities identified within the Plan were based upon public consultation and as a key document it had been placed in the Council's Forward Work Programme. A brief summary of the Council's actions and priorities had also been included in the Council Tax leaflet circulated to .

The Council monitored its performance against the Key Planned Actions set out in the Strategic Plan and against the targets set for the BVPI's by means of quarterly performance clinics.

In response to a Members' query regarding the baseline position with regard to the action in respect of pupil bullying it was agreed that this would be examined and the Committee advised accordingly.

ORDERED that subject to any minor editorial changes the Strategic Plan Update 2007/08 be approved.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS DRAFT 2006/2007

A report of the Director of Resources was presented regarding the draft Statement of Accounts 2006/07 a full copy of which had been provided in the Members' Resources Section and to the Committee within the prescribed format in accordance with current legislation and guidance.

Reference was made to the 2006 'Statement of Recommended Practice' which had introduced significant changes to the content and format of the 2006/2007 Statement of Accounts including the following: -

- a) the replacement of the Consolidated Revenue Account and Statement of Total Movement on Reserves with an Income and Expenditure Account, Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance and Statement of Total and Recognised Gains and Losses;
- b) a requirement to group the main or 'core' financial statements together (i.e. Income and Expenditure Account, Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance, Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses, Balance Sheet and Cash Flow Statement) followed by supporting notes;
- c) changes in the format of the Group Accounts aimed at removing unnecessary differences between the format of the core financial statements and the Group Accounts;
- d) the Statement of Internal Control had been amended to include an assurance on the corporate governance arrangements of the subsidiaries, associates or joint ventures in which the Council had material interests;
- e) the removal of the requirements to make a capital financing charge (Notional Interest).

Details were given of the Statement, the main components of which were as follows: -

Appendix A – Income and Expenditure Account, which provided the net cost for the year of all the functions/services for which the Authority was responsible and demonstrated how that cost had been financed from general government grants and income from local taxpayers;

Appendix B – Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance which provided reconciliation between the statutory requirement for raising council tax and the technical accounting format of the Income and Expenditure Account;

Appendix C – Statement of Total Recognised Gains and Losses which summarised all the gains and losses on movements on the headings within the Balance Sheet together with the final balance on the Income and Expenditure Account to demonstrate the total movement in the Authority's net worth for the year;

Appendix D – Balance Sheet which detailed the value of assets owned by the Council, the level of creditor (amounts owed by the Council), the level of debtors (amounts owed to the Council) and the level of provisions and balances maintained by the Council;

Appendix E – Cash Flow Statement, which summarised the revenue and capital cash payments and cash receipts made by the Council to/and from third parties.

Reference was made to the following key areas: -

- a) Equal Pay

- b) FRS 17 & Net Pension Assets
- c) Job Evaluation
- d) Gains and Losses on the Sale of Assets.

It was noted that the Statement of Accounts 2006/2007 would still be subject to external audit by the District Auditor which was expected to be concluded in August 2007 following which a further report would be presented to the Committee.

The Committee was advised that as part of the quality control provisions two transactions had been shown incorrectly within the Statement of Accounts. It was confirmed that this had not affected the overall figures. Revised pages of the Statement of Accounts had been circulated accordingly.

ORDERED that the 2006/2007 draft Statement of Accounts be approved.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS – MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP – APPOINTMENT

With the approval of the Chair and on the grounds of urgency in view of the time constraints involved the Committee agreed to consider a matter relating to the membership of the Member Development Working Group.

The Members' Office Manager reported that further to the appointments made at the meeting of the Council held on 23 May 2007 and following discussions with the Chair of the Council it was agreed that the composition of the Member Development Working Group should be as follows: -

Chair of Council (Chair), Deputy Mayor, three Group Leaders (Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat/ Marton Independent Group) and one Independent.

The Committee was advised that following discussions with the Chair of the Council and taking into account the requirements of the I&DeA Member Development Charter it was suggested that the appointment of one Independent be made to one of the newly elected Independent Members. An indication was given of the responses received from such Members.

ORDERED that the Member Development Working Group comprise the Chair of Council (Chair), Deputy Mayor, three Group Leaders (Labour, Conservative and Liberal Democrat/ Marton Independent Group) and one Independent, namely, Councillor Dunne for the Municipal Year 2007/2008.