

EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the Inaugural Meeting of the Strategic Overview Committee held at Knowle, Sidmouth on 1 June 2004

Present:

Councillors:

Mrs K J Bamsey	B O Ingham
Mrs M J Boote	H J Jeffery
P W Burrows	Mrs A E Liverton
D G Button	R C Peachey
T A Cope	N J Spence
R H H Cross	Dr H W Waterworth
A R Giles	S C Wragg
D R H Hull	

Also Present:

Councillors:

D J Cox	G K Liverton
P A Diviani	Ms S M Merritt
Miss J M Elson	A T Moulding
M J L Green	A J Wilkinson
S Hughes	

The meeting started at 6.30pm and ended at 8.50pm

*1

Election of Chairman

Councillor Dr H W Waterworth was proposed and seconded as Chairman of the Strategic Overview Committee for the ensuing year. Councillor D G Button was also proposed and seconded for the position but was not elected.

RESOLVED that Councillor Dr H W Waterworth be elected Chairman of the Strategic Overview Committee for the ensuing year.

*2

Election of Vice Chairman

Councillor B O Ingham was proposed and seconded as Vice Chairman of the Strategic Overview Committee for the ensuing year. Councillor A R Giles was also proposed and seconded for the position but was not elected.

RESOLVED that Councillor B O Ingham be elected Vice Chairman of the Strategic Overview Committee for the ensuing year.

*3

Draft work programme 2004/05

Members noted that the terms of reference for the Committee were as follows: 'the consideration of corporate planning and the performance management framework, the impact of improvement planning, the progress of our organisational development, including consideration of the budgeting process, and e-government targets. With particular overview and scrutiny of matters arising within the Communication and Resources Portfolios. It was considered that the Committee should ensure the building blocks were in place to achieve a CPA rating of 'excellent' in 2006/07.

***3 Draft work programme 2004/05 (Cont)**

Consideration was given to the draft work programme for 2004/05. It was suggested that the Communication and Consultation meeting should be brought forward to November 2004. The Organisational Culture meeting scheduled for then would be put back to March 2005 and extended to include discussion on recruitment and retention. Given the number of matters to be considered under this heading it could be extended to cover two meetings if felt appropriate, without affecting the rest of the work programme.

RESOLVED that the draft work programme for 2004-05 be adopted subject to 'Communication and Consultation' being considered in November 2004 and 'Organisational Culture' being considered in March 2005 with an additional bullet point on Recruitment and Retention being included.

***4 Performance Management Framework**

The Corporate Directors for Central Services and Economy gave a joint presentation on the Performance Management Framework. Members were advised of how the Council's corporate strategies, service plans and employees' objectives set at appraisals related back, through a hierarchical process to the Community Plan. Using the CPA inspection report, a corporate improvement plan has been drawn up and was being monitored on a quarterly basis to track our achievements. The Strategic Management Team were also closely monitoring the financial situation of the Council. Members were advised of the increasing growth in the revenue budget shortfall and how this would have to reflect back on the services provided. A Leaders' Services Priorities Group had been set up to prioritise services provided. The findings of the Group would be considered by each Overview Committee before being used to draw up the budget for 2005/6.

Detailed consideration was given to the report of the Policy Manger with regard to the Performance Management Framework. The report advised that Prioritisation and Performance Management were reported as being the two weakest themes of the ten examined during the CPA inspection. The steps taken to address these weaknesses were outlined. Concern was raised over the number of acronyms used throughout the documents attached as appendices to the report. A glossary of acroynms and terms was in the process of being drawn up by the Member Services Team.

The Post CPA Report Improvement Plan, attached as Appendix C to the report detailed under 12 main headings issues to be addressed and actions to be taken. The following suggestions for changes were made:

Issue 1 – add Members to the list of resources to be used

Issue 2 – consider whether 'marketing' and 'branding' were appropriate words to use

Issue 17 – a fourth action to be added to explore possible other links with town and parish councils.

Appendix D to the report was a comparison of current corporate strategy top and secondary priorities and suggested changes made by Town and Parish Councils. Under the goal of providing a 'safe and healthy community', feedback from the Town and Parish Councils suggested that providing help for the elderly and disabled to continue living in their own homes should be of greater priority to the Council than securing regular and frequent means of community and public transport. It was suggested that this feedback may have been received under the misapprehension that the District Council could do little about transport provision but could assist people to stay in their own homes. As transport regularly shows in the top priorities in local consultation exercises, it was agreed that the Council had a role to provide leadership and to champion the needs of its community. and that the existing priorities should remain. In addition it was agreed that the priorities under the goal of 'protecting the environment' should remain as current but that the amended priorities put forward by the Town and Parish Councils under the goals of 'securing the

***4 Performance Management Framework (Cont)**

long term future of the local economy' and 'becoming an excellent Council' should be adopted.

- RECOMMENDED**
1. that the progress made in addressing weaknesses in Prioritisation and Performance Management be noted;
 2. that the proposed arrangements for the quarterly monitoring of Performance Indicators and key outcomes from Service Plans be approved, including improvements arising from Best Value Reviews and the CPA Improvement Plan, during 2004/05 as set out in paragraph 5.d) of the main body of the report;
 3. that the Council's CPA Improvement Plan be approved as set out in Appendix C to the report and amended above;
 4. that the Corporate Strategy be amended to include the top and secondary priorities suggested by Town and Parish Councils and shown in Appendix D to the report for the goals of 'securing the long term future of the local economy' and 'becoming an excellent Council';
 5. that the Annual Performance Plan 2004 be largely web based;
 6. that a follow – up day to the 'Peer Review' take place towards the end of 2004 as set out in paragraph 12. of the main body of the report, provided that the cost was included in the original fee.

5 Corporate and employment policy updates

Consideration was given to the report of the Head of Organisational Development in respect of five new / updated policies to be included in the employment handbook. Approximately thirty more policies required updating due to changes in legislation. Each policy would be accompanied by a workshop for managers. Suggestions were made for minor changes to the wording used in the Email Policy and for confirmation of the law regarding the use of mobile phones in cars parked with engines switched off.

- RECOMMENDED** that the following employment and corporate policies be accepted and delegated authority be given to the Corporate Director – Central Services and the Portfolio Holder for Resources to liaise with the Staff Joint Forum and make minor amendments if necessary.
- Disciplinary Policy and Procedure
 - Absence Management Policy
 - Equality and Diversity Policy
 - Email Policy
 - Mobile Phone Policy

Chairman

Date.....