

**CPA TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD
SAFFRON WALDEN at 8.30 am on 4 NOVEMBER 2003**

Present : Councillor A Dean – Chairman.
Councillors R J Copping, E J Godwin and R T Harris.

Officers in attendance: - J B Dickson, R Kirmani, I Orton, B D Perkins and
J Rice.

CPA53 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence was received from Councillor A J Ketteridge and
A M Wattebot.

CPA54 NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The notes of the meeting held on 8 October were received, confirmed and
signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

CPA55 MATTERS ARISING

(i) CPA50 – DISTRICT CPA

The Director of Resources and the Policy and Performance Manager reported
on their visit to the Horsham District Council
that had been awarded 'Excellent' in their recent CPA assessment. This
Council had robust financial position and the areas where they excelled were
Performance Management, Risk Management, Member /officer partnership
and the Cabinet style political structure. In response to a query the Group was
informed that their major strength was that they were more experienced than
Uttlesford.

CPA56 CORPORATE SELF ASSESSMENT-SCORING FOR PEER CHALLENGE

The Policy and Performance Manager introduced the draft document (version
seven) that had been submitted to IDeA on 31 October 2003. He outlined the
key points like what the Council was trying to achieve and what were its
ambitions.

A draft Corporate Self Assessment Scoring Grid was circulated at the meeting
and the Members agreed to allocate scores to each theme and Key questions
outlined in the document.

The following themes and key areas were discussed in detail: -

1 - AMBITION

The Council had set about achieving its ambitions through a range of
strategies and plans. A draft new Corporate Plan 2003-2007 would be

submitted to the Council in December 2003 it contained programmed actions to deliver the Council's ambitions.

2 - PRIORITISATION

The Members agreed that the process to identify what were the priorities for improvement had been carried out after extensive consultation with staff, partners, service providers, users of the service and stakeholders.

3 - FOCUS

The Members agreed that the Council had remained focused on what mattered over time and recent examples included the Leisure Public Finance Initiative project, the sustained campaign to resist the expansion of Stansted Airport and Best Value commitment to move Planning services from Great Dunmow to Saffron Walden so all Council services could operate under one roof.

4 – CAPACITY

The Members noted that a skills audit would be carried out to identify where additional development and resources were required to ensure that priorities were delivered.

5 - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

The Council had recently introduced an enhanced performance management framework that would produce quarterly data on the corporate and service health of the organisation.

Uttlesford had in place a risk management strategy, corporate governance arrangements and a robust range of financial performance measure to ensure the Council achieved value for money.

6 – ACHIEVEMENT IN QUALITY OF SERVICE

The Council made extensive use of performance indicators, both national and local to measure the quality of our service delivery.

The Council was above average in areas like sickness level payments of invoices, Council/NNDR collected, household waste recycled, satisfaction level of tenants, performance indicators, robust targets were still in place to do even better and deliver continuous improvements.

7 - ACHIEVEMENT OF IMPROVEMENT

Through self-analysis there was clear evidence that the Council had seen significant improvements in service areas.

8 - INVESTMENT

The Council had a robust medium term financial strategy in place. The Council had identified priorities areas and had used the resources to address gaps in the organisation and had employed additional staff to help deliver these priorities.

9 - LEARNING

Uttlesford was improving at learning from others as well as from its own experiences. The Council had welcomed external challenges such as Peer Review, IIP, Best Value Reviews and use of external consultants.

10 - FUTURE PLANS

The Council had an approved Uttlesford Community Plan agreed by the Local Strategic Partnership. The Corporate Quality of Life Plan 2003-07 would be considered by the Council in December 2003. The Council regularly reviewed its future plans.

The Members agreed that the Councils overall score should be 'good' and to achieve this all service areas should be looked at to identify and highlight the areas where the Council excelled and the areas where improvement was required.

CPA57 IdeA-PEER CHALLENGE-TIME SCALE

The Policy and Performance Manager circulated a revised draft schedule of interviews and meetings for the three days Peer Challenge which would be held on 24, 25 and 26 November 2003.

The Members noted the revised version of the schedule.

CPA58 TIMESCALE

The Policy and Performance Manager introduced version 5 of the CPA timescale document and the Comprehensive Performance Assessment document. CPA was about helping Councils to deliver better services to local people. Uttlesford District Council would be subject to a CPA site visit the week beginning 23 February 2004 and an IDEa Peer Challenge during 24 to 26 of November 2003.

CPA 59 CPA DOCUMENTATION – PROCESS

The Policy and Performance Manager reported on the CPA Documentation process and the timescale. It was agreed that this Group would meet on 7 January 2004 to discuss the final CPA Document prior to its delivery to the Audit Commission on 9 January 2004.

It was agreed that a report to be submitted to the next meeting of this Group on key information contained in the Corporate Self Assessment document and the two diagnostic reviews that would be submitted to the Audit Commission.

CPA60 TRAINING AND INFORMATION

The Group agreed that a circular should be sent to the Members requesting them to identify their training needs after six months in office.

CPA61 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Group agreed the following dates and times for future meetings

19 November 2003 at 6 pm

3 December 2003 at 9 am
17 December 2003 at 6 pm
7 January 2004 at 9 am
28 January 2004 at 6 pm.
11 February 2004 at 9 am
18 February 2004 at 9 am.

The meeting ended at 9.55 am.