**E GOVERNMENT TASK GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES
LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 10.00 am on 7 FEBRUARY 2002**

Present:-   Councillors R A Merrion, R W L Stone and A R Thawley.

Officers in Attendance:-   Mrs L J Crowe and J K Mercer.

EG1   **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN**

Councillor Stone proposed Councillor Thawley as Chairman. Councillor Thawley declined and proposed Councillor Merrion as Chairman. It was

> RESOLVED that Councillor Merrion be Chairman of the e-Government Task Group.

EG2   **PRESENTATION BY DAVID REES OF DELOITTE & TOUCHE**

David Rees a management consultant from Deloitte & Touche, gave a presentation to Members on the vision for e-Government. He said that there had been a rapid growth in the use of technology which had impacted upon the business community in particular. As an example he highlighted how technology had led to reductions in average costs per transaction in retail banking through the use of the Internet.

He also explained the difference between e-Commerce and e-Business and stated that the modernisation agenda would increase access to information for everybody.

The Government had set a target that, by 2005, 100% of all council services should be capable of being delivered electronically. The four strategic aims of e-government were:-

(i)   Building services around choice
(ii)   Making services more accessible
(iii)   Making better use of information
(iv)   Ensuring social inclusion

It would be very important for authorities to join up for e-Government to be successful.

There would need to be different portals for different groups of users, eg citizen, business, employee or elected member. In answer to a question from Councillor Stone, Mr Rees said that it would be difficult for small authorities to meet the deadlines. They would need to change the way they had worked in the past by starting to work with partners. Councillor Thawley commented that secure authentication needed further investigation and development if e-government was to be widely adopted by the public.

EG3 **CORE WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received a report which provided a brief overview of e-Government and recommended a core programme of work to be carried out by the Task Group. The following areas were suitable for electronic service delivery:-

(i)   Providing information
(ii)   Collecting revenue
(iii)   Providing grants and benefits
(iv)   Consultation
(v)   Regulation (Licensing, planning etc)
(vi)   Applications for services.
(vii)   Booking venues, resources and courses
(viii) Paying for goods and services
(ix)   Accessing community, professional or business networks
(x)   Accessing life long learning
(xi)   Procurement

The Government had acknowledged that new technology should not replace personal contact, but should make it better supported. E-Government was a series of interconnected projects contributing to the 2005 target and the wider e-Government objectives. The projects could be divided into three groups:-

(i)   National Projects,
(ii)   Local Projects, and
(iii)   County and Regional Partnership Projects.

The Council's progress in implementing e-Government was being monitored through the best value performance indicator BV157.

Councillor Merrion and John Dickson had been nominated as the member and officer e-Champions respectively. The Corporate Support Best Value Reference Group had agreed terms of reference for the Task Group.

Funding of £150,000 was currently being sought for 2002/03 to develop e-Government's services. An additional £200,000 funding for 2002/03 should be received from the Government's modernisation fund. A similar sum would be provided in 2003/04 provided that the Council was able to demonstrate that sufficient progress had been made. The District Council was also actively participating in a countywide bid for further funding from the modernisation fund. The release of money would be dependant upon councils being able to demonstrate that effective partnership working was taking place. Included within this bid was a proposed project to link councils within Uttlesford with the District Council electronically. This would act as a pilot project for a larger Essex Extranet project. Members received a copy of the joint submission. The cost of fully implementing e-Government was estimated at approximately £2,000,000 for Uttlesford. Consequently, there would be a significant shortfall between the cost of e-Government and the existing sources of funding and other methods of funding would need to be identified.

Councillor Merrion drew attention to correspondence from DTLR on e-Government and said there would be an e-mail newsletter circulated fortnightly. He would forward this on to members of the e-Government Task

Group. He also drew attention to the difficulty Councillor Bowker was having with his computer system.

Members agreed that the e-Government Task Group should meet monthly with the aim of producing an e-Government Strategy by September 2002.

The Head of IT and Audit Services suggested that as a starting point, a joint member/officer workshop take place to develop the Council's vision for e-Government and how services might look in 2005. For the next meeting, officers would report on possible options and priorities for inclusion in the 2002/03 IT Programme.

Members agreed to adopt the work programme presented in the report to this meeting.

The meeting ended at 12.25 pm.