

**INTERNAL SERVICES SUB COMMITTEE held at 7.30pm at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN on 28
JUNE 2000**

Present: Councillor E C Abrahams - Chairman.
Councillors Mrs C A Bayley, W F Bowker, Mrs C A Cant,
D M Jones, R A Merrion, A R Row, R W L Stone and
A R Thawley.

Officers in attendance: G Branchett, Mrs M Cox, Mrs S McLagan,
J K Mercer and B D Perkins.

IS1 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R P Chambers
and A Dean.

IS2 APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED that Councillor D M Jones be appointed Vice
Chairman of the Sub-Committee for the ensuing year.

IS3 MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 5 April 2000 were received,
confirmed and signed by the Chairman as a correct record.

**IS4 REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES -
CONFERENCE ON IMPLEMENTING THE NATIONAL CHARTER**

Councillor Mrs Cant circulated a report on her attendance at a
conference organised by the Improvement and Development Agency
held on 18 May 2000. The conference had discussed issues concerned
with the implementation of the National Charter for Member
Development. Key points had included the need for Members chairing
meetings to receive training, the importance of the new scrutiny role,
engaging the community and the importance of Member personal
development plans.

IS5 IT WORKING PARTY

The Minutes of the meeting of the IT Working Party held on 22 June
2000 were received.

The Sub-Committee discussed the forthcoming introduction of Members' home computing. The training was currently underway but there was some concern that it was not basic enough for those Members who had not used a computer before. It was pointed out that an "Introduction to Computing Course" had been offered to all Members. Officers were conscious that some Members might benefit from one to one training sessions which would be arranged, if appropriate.

The Head of Audit and IT apologised for the problems that some Members had experienced with the installation of the BT Data line. Members asked that an assurance be gained from BT that the installation of the second line would not degrade existing connections.

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting of the IT Working Party held on 22 June 2000 be approved and adopted.

IS6

ITEMS REFERRED FROM OTHER COMMITTEES

(i) Workload and Staffing in the Development Control Business Centre

At the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee on 21 June 2000, Members had received a report detailing the workload and staffing situation in the Development Control Business Centre. The general workload and increased number of planning applications was resulting in delays in handling other work such as replying to correspondence. At the meeting Members had agreed to support the establishment of a new part-time post of Senior Technical Support Officer. The cost of the post would be met from additional fee income.

RESOLVED that a new part-time post of Senior Technical Support Officer up to 30 hours per week in the Development Control Business Centre be approved.

(ii) Staffing in the Building Surveying Business Centre

At the meeting of the Planning and Development Committee on 21 June 2000, Members had been advised of the growth in workload within the Building Surveying Business Centre. Due to financial constraints it was not considered appropriate to appoint a fully qualified surveyor but the reinstatement of a Trainee Building Surveyor post would meet the current service requirements, develop the business and help meet the need for qualified building surveyors in the future. At the meeting Members had recommended the creation of the post and the appointment of the current work based trainee to that position. The post would be funded from additional fee income.

RESOLVED that the establishment of a Trainee Building Surveyor post be approved with immediate effect and that the existing workbased trainee be directly appointed to the post.

IS7 **EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

RESOLVED that under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involved the likely disclosure of Exempt Information as defined in paragraphs 1,7 and 9 of part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(iii) Tourism Service Restructure

The meeting of the Community Services Committee on 27 June 2000 had been advised that a request had been received from an officer within the Tourism Section to work part-time. The report considered how the request could be accommodated and recommended a staffing structure that would continue to provide a high standard of tourism service at no additional cost to the Council.

RESOLVED that the following be approved with immediate effect:

- 1 the amended Tourism Service Structure as set out in the report to Community Services Committee on 27 June 2000, and
- 2 new job descriptions for the Tourism Officer and two TIC Duty Managers.

The public were then readmitted to the meeting.

IS8 **EQUAL OPPORTUNITY SERVICE STATEMENTS**

The Sub-Committee was asked to approve the adoption of Equal Opportunity Service Statements for the Office Services Section, the Audit and Investigation Section and the Information Technology Business Centre.

In accordance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy, Service Statements had to be prepared for all the Council's services. Each Business Centre was required to produce a statement which set out specific Equal Opportunity matters for each service to include service aims and objectives, procedures and practices to support or achieve the aims, responsible officers and monitoring and review methods.

RESOLVED that the Equal Opportunity Service Statements for Office Services, Audit and Investigations and Information Technology be approved.

IS9

RELOCATION BENEFITS

At their last meeting, Members had considered proposed changes to the Council's scheme of relocation benefits for employees. The Sub-Committee had generally been in agreement with the report but had asked that officers review some aspects of the eligibility criteria. The first point referred to the eligibility criteria for distance from the work base to home which could have been open to misinterpretation. It was proposed that items (e) and (f) be changed to:-

- (e) the employee's existing primary residence must be more than 25 miles from his/her normal workbase unless they are relocating to service accommodation, and
- (f) the employee must relocate to within 20 miles of their normal workbase.

The second point was whether, in exceptional circumstances, the benefits could apply to existing employees who took up a different post within the Council. The report referred to specific circumstances that might warrant assistance and it was agreed that the exceptional circumstances clause should remain as follows:-

- (a) to be a newly appointed employee or in exceptional circumstances, subject to the approval of the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Internal Services Sub-Committee, an existing employee who takes up a different post within the Council.

RESOLVED that Personnel Policy Note 43 - Scheme of Relocation Benefits, be amended as above, and adopted with immediate effect.

IS10 EXAMINATION SUCCESS - TEAM LEADER REVENUE SERVICES

It was reported that Mrs A Parry-Jones had been awarded Level I of the Institute of Revenues, Rating and Valuation full professional qualification and had received special recognition as being the overall national best candidate. Members recognised that this was an exceptional achievement and it was

RESOLVED that the Chairman, on behalf of the Sub-Committee, send a letter of congratulations to Mrs Parry-Jones.

The meeting ended at 8.35 pm.