Committee: Resources Committee

Date: 22 January 2004

Agenda Item No: 5

Title: **Confirmation of Officers Actions – Market Supplements for Planning Officers**

Author: **John Mitchell 01799 510450**

Summary

1   Market Supplements for two years, paid for by the Planning Delivery Grant, have been authorised by Officers in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman. Confirmation of this action, which does not impact on the revenue account, is sought.

Background

2   Expenditure of up to £48,704 annually from the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG) has been approved for a period of two years to fund market supplements for some staff within the planning department, and to aid recruitment. This is included in the planning Services Best Value Review Service Improvement Plan and has the support of the Member Reference Group. The need is urgent as Planning Services have been unable to recruit qualified and experienced planners on the salaries offered at present, and have carried two vacancies for some 6 months now.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee confirm the action taken by Officers, in consultation with the Vice-Chairman of the Resources Committee.

Committee: All Committees of the Council

Date: January & February 2004

Agenda Item: 8

Title: Performance Management System:

Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510 402

Summary

1   This report informs all Committees of the Council the progress with the introduction of a Performance Management System within Uttlesford. The report recommends the layout of the reporting mechanism and the process to resolve issues of under performance.

2   The report also recommends that performance monitoring be reported to Scrutiny Committees with Scrutiny Committees referring any issues to the appropriate Policy Committee.

Background

3   Corporate Management Team on the 11th July 2003 agreed the introduction of a Performance Management System and authorized the Performance Manager to meet with Service Heads to develop a robust range of Performance Indicators to measure both the corporate and service health of the authority. Once this process was completed a report outlining the range of performance measures was to go to all Committees of the Council seeking the views of Members on the robustness and reporting mechanism of the Performance Management system

4   A range of draft Performance Measures were developed with Heads of Service and a multi committee report did the rounds in September and October 2003. As a result of this exercise 68 Performance Measures were identified as forming the basis of the pilot performance management framework. Members asked for an additional performance indicator to measure homeliness and this have been added. In addition officers were asked to explore additional methods to measure access to services and customer care. The First Point of Contact Review Team is carrying out this exercise. Some concern was raised about a Traffic Lights Reporting Mechanism, as this would discriminate against people who are colour blind. To meet this concern colour coded Smiley Faces were added to the reporting mechanism.

5   To keep the reporting process simple it is recommended that the following mechanism is introduced:

***Green for On Target to achieve agreed Performance Target –
Smiley Face***

***Amber for up to 10% slippage from agreed Performance Target – Straight
Face***

***Red for more than 10% from agreed Performance Target –
Glum Face***

6   Attached at Appendix A is a draft report for the Half Year with details of 03/04 performances delivered. The format of the reporting is:

Indicator Code – if it is a National Indicator or a Local Indicator

Basic Details of the Performance Measure

A 2002/03 Performance Outturn if the data exists

Target for 2003/04

Quarterly data for April to June and July to Sept 03

Daventry Benchmarking Group 2002/03 – 16 authorities broadly the same as Uttlesford DC. How Uttlesford was placed either Top/Medium/Lower in categories in 2002/03

Smiley Face/Straight or Glum Faces based on colour code –

Comments if required

The quarterly data will be reported to SMT and colleagues with Reds will outline a recovery package or a request to re-work the target. This information will be included in the quarterly reporting report to Scrutiny Committees. Scrutiny Committees will have the opportunity to refer comments on performance to the appropriate policy committee.

7   At the Half Year there were six Red Indicators out of 69. They are:

- Financial Penalties imposed by the Inland Revenue
- Percentage of debt outstanding at 90 days
- Average length of stay in Bed & Breakfast
- New tenants visits completed within 3 months
- Score against a checklist of environmental standards
- Percentage of valid planning applications determined within 5 weeks

These six indicators are all being re-examined to ensure that the data returns are accurate and that the performance targets are realistic. For example three of the indicators have a target of 100%, is this ambitious?

8   The Performance Management system will be piloted for the rest of 2003/04 with reports delivered to Scrutiny Committees in Jan/Feb and March 2004.

The system will be fine tuned as required and the formal mechanism will commence from April 2004.

RECOMMENDED that

1   the comments of all Committees are sought on the Range of Performance Measures, Performance Targets and use of a Traffic Light System

2   Note that the Performance Review Data will be reported to Scrutiny Committee(s).

3   Note that any Red Indicator will have a Rescue Recovery Package from the relevant manager incorporated into the report.

Committee:	**Resources**
Date:	**22 January 2004**
Agenda Item No:	**9**
Title:	**Risk Management Strategy**
Author:	**John Dickson (01799) 510300**
	Nick Harris (01799) 510313

Summary

1   This report seeks confirmation of action taken by the Member/Officer Risk Management Steering Group to approve a Risk Management Strategy and then submit it to the Audit Commission as part of the Council's Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) submission papers.

Background

2   Corporate Governance is one of the most significant issues currently facing both private and public organisations. The Council's code of Corporate Governance adopted in March 2003 includes a section on Risk Management and identifies a number of areas for updating. These areas are set out in the Council's Risk Management Policy attached at Appendix A of this Strategy. The Strategy is designed to address these areas and will assist the Council in ensuring that it fully meets its Corporate Governance obligations.

3   The Audit Commission have examined the Council's Risk Management activities and in their audit of the 2002-03 Accounts and Financial Statements have endorsed the development of a Risk Management Strategy.

4   This Committee approved the Risk Management Policy in June 2003 and also agreed to appoint Zurich Municipal Management Services to facilitate the identification and analysis of the Council's major strategic risks as at that point in time. This work was undertaken during October and November 2003. A more detailed description of the work undertaken can be found in Paragraph 3 of the Strategy. All the risks identified during that period are reproduced at Appendix C of the Strategy. However it must be emphasised that the impact of risks is constantly changing and monitoring arrangements are therefore essential.

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RECOMMENDED that the decision of the Risk Management Steering Group to approve and submit the attached Risk Management Strategy to the Audit Commission as part of the Council's Comprehensive Performance submissions be confirmed.

Background Papers: None.

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Council recognises its responsibility for the management of both external and internal risk and the necessity to demonstrate its commitment to implant risk management into daily operations from service planning through to corporate processes.

Risk is defined as being the threat that an event or action will adversely affect an organisation's ability to achieve its objectives and to successfully carry out its strategies.

Risk management is defined as being the culture, processes and structure that are directed towards effective management of potential opportunities and threats to the organisation achieving its objectives. (Association of Local Authority Risk Managers (ALARM)/District Audit)

The Council's risk management objectives are as follows:

- To integrate risk management into the Council's culture and strategic planning processes.
- To manage risk in accordance with best practice.
- To anticipate and respond to changing social, environmental and legislative requirements.
- To prevent injury, damage and losses and reduce the cost of risk.
- To raise awareness of the need for risk management by all those involved in the delivery of the Council's services.
- To take actions to minimise the likelihood of risks occurring and/or reducing severity of the consequences of an event.
- To ensure that risks are monitored regularly and reported to Members in order to inform the annual Corporate Governance assurance statement.

The Council will achieve these objectives by:

- Establishing a Risk Management Steering Group to oversee the process.

- Producing and regularly reviewing a prioritised corporate risk register.

- Establishing clear roles, responsibilities and reporting lines for action planning, controls, training, procedures and reviewing actions taken.

- Incorporating strategic risk management considerations in the setting of its priorities, service delivery planning and Best Value Reviews.
- Arranging training opportunities if required for members of the Steering Group and other staff.

- Developing the risk management aspects of Corporate Governance including the assurance statement.

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RISK MANAGEMENT STEERING GROUP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Mission Statement

The Risk Management Steering Group will develop a formal framework to assist the Council in managing the hazards and risks that could threaten its ability to achieve its objectives and priorities and deliver services to the community.

Group Members

Director of Resources (Chair)
Housing Services Manager
Head of Community and Leisure Services
Head of Environmental Services
Head of Planning and Building Surveying
Internal Audit Manager
Principal Accountant

The Group will normally meet quarterly but during the production of the risk register more frequent meetings will be required.

Aims and Objectives

- Recommend the Risk Management Policy Statement to CMT and Resources Committee.
- Agree a clear definition of risk management that is readily understood throughout the Council and ensure that the Council meets the requirements of the risk management elements of its Code of Corporate Governance.
- Prepare and review the risk management aspects of the Corporate Governance assurance statement.
- Facilitate the development and maintenance of the Councils Risk Register.
- Determine the roles, responsibilities and lines of reporting within the Council for risk management and to recommend appropriate training for staff.
- Form 'task and finish' groups where necessary to investigate and act on specific issues.
- Ensure that risk management issues are included in the Council's service planning framework.
- Determine other reporting requirements including regular reports to Corporate Management Team and Scrutiny 2 Committee.

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STRATEGIC RISKS IDENTIFIED WITH ZMMS

ABOVE THE RISK TOLERANCE LINE

- Objectives in Quality of Life Plan not yet prioritised/adequately resourced.
- Insufficient resources available for key political objectives/Members want to reduce funding of a statutory service.
- Delayed decisions on development proposals of regional and national significance.
- Council fails to influence development proposals effectively.
- Difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff in key specialist areas.
- Lack of excess capacity for strategic issues – reliance on the 'usual suspects' to take projects and initiatives forward.
- Senior managers required to balance strategic/operational role – sufficient time not devoted to a strategic initiative.
- Lack of project management skills and capacity – staff do not always recognise what a project is.
- Members reluctant to make a key decision.
- Key opportunities missed through risk averse thinking.
- Council slow to develop business process re-engineering required by e-government.
- Council fails to influence national, regional or sub-regional agenda.
- Competing demands get in the way of strategic planning.
- Some services provided by partners in local government and formal contracts not always in place.

BELOW THE RISK TOLERANCE LINE

- Proportion of managers lacking general management skills.
- Performance management not part of the culture of the organisation.
- Ineffective communication of corporate messages.
- Silo working.
- Expectations of CPA score not met.
- Opportunities during period of change not seized.
- Lack of clarity/understanding of what Local Strategic Partnership can achieve.
- Council not good at recognising and celebrating success.
- Lack of robust business continuity planning.

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Committee:	Resources
Date:	22 January 2004
Agenda Item No:	10
Title:	Sewards End Parish Council – Arrangements for Establishment and Precept for 2004/05
Author:	Peter Snow (01799 510431)

Summary

1   This report outlines arrangements for the creation of a new parish council in Sewards End (formerly part of the Saffron Walden Town Council area) and details the level of precept that will be required by the parish council for the first year of operation.

Background

2   Following an extensive public consultation exercise as part of a parish review undertaken in 2001 and 2002, the Council recommended to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) that a new parish of Sewards End should be created from part of the existing parish of Saffron Walden.

3   The Uttlesford (Parishes) Order was duly made by the ODPM in September 2003. The order provides for a new parish of Sewards End to be constituted and directs the Council to establish a parish council with effect from 1 April 2004. An order giving effect to this direction will be made on 28 January.

4   There are two principal matters that must now be determined. The first concerns the election or appointment of parish councillors to serve in the parish. The second matter concerns the preparation of a budget and setting of a precept for the first year of the parish council's operation. The Council has a statutory responsibility in both respects.

5   As far as the first matter is concerned, it is regretted that a major snag has arisen. A recent legislative change has transferred to the Electoral Commission (EC) from ODPM functions relating to electoral arrangements in new parishes. The EC is unable to make the necessary order to enable the Council to hold an election of parish councillors on 25 March as originally intended. However, the parish council must legally be in a position to function from 1 April.

6   The solution devised by officers is to use powers in the Representation of the People Act 1983 to appoint five persons to act as parish councillors until such time as it is legally possible to hold an election. The order establishing the parish council will include provision for this procedure to take place. It is intended to invite applications from qualified residents to be received by 12 Noon on 27 February.

7   If there are more than five applicants, an informal poll will be held of electors in Sewards End to guide the Council in appointing parish councillors. A report will be considered at the Council meeting on 10 February requesting that officers are granted delegated power to appoint parish councillors. These appointments will be effective from 1 April until 31 March 2005, or until such time as an election can properly be held whichever is the earlier.

8   The second matter concerns the setting of a precept for the initial year of operation in 2004/05. In September last year, the Committee resolved to appoint the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) to act as agent for the Council in creating the new parish council. Councillor Martin Savage (Ashdon Ward) has been helping to liaise between various agencies and local residents.

9   Last November, EALC appointed Angie Balcombe as the development officer for the project. She is an experienced parish clerk and has been involved in setting up three other parish councils in Essex. She will act as interim clerk until interviews for a permanent clerk can be held in June 2004 and will hand over to the appointed clerk in July. Representatives of the Council and EALC will explain to residents what is involved at a public meeting in February.

10   Sewards End is a small community of approximately 370 electors. There is no parish land and few amenities to be controlled by the new parish council. There is a village hall that is owned and managed by a separate committee but there is no recreation ground or playing field. The only inherited responsibilities will be those involving the cutting of grass verges and the emptying of litter-bins.

11   In preparing the budget, the principle has been followed that the new council should be adequately resourced and that both the clerk and councillors should receive appropriate levels of training. The 2004/05 budget contains a number of set-up costs that will not recur in subsequent years.

12   The Council has a legal obligation to set the precept for the new parish council so that a budget is available during the first year of operation. The grant of £3,150 already made to EALC for set-up costs will be reclaimed

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when the precept is paid (less the cost of producing some publicity material on the parish council's behalf).

RECOMMENDED that the Committee

1   approves the proposed precept of £11,080 on behalf of Sewards End Parish Council for the year commencing 1 April 2004, as set out in more detail in the attached budget; and

2   approves in principle (subject to Council authority being granted) the proposed arrangements for the appointment of parish councillors to take office on 1 April 2004, until 31 March 2005, or until such time as an election of parish councillors can be held, whichever is the earlier.

Background Papers: The Council's Parish Review report; The Uttlesford (Parishes) Order 2003; and the EALCs development proposals for Sewards End

DETAILS OF THE PROPOSED PRECEPT FOR SEWARDS END PARISH
COUNCIL 2004/05

Set-up costs

Stationery/publications	100
Publicity/printing	(all to be produced & supplied by UDC)
Hire of village hall (4 meetings @3hrs)	120
EALC Development Officer (Nov 03 – June 04)	2,500

	2,770

Operational costs (April 2004 – March 2005)

Election costs	700
Stationery/publications	200
Office equipment (filing cabinet)	100
Training for clerk and 5 councillors	500
Printing/ photocopying	300
Recruitment of clerk (advertising)	200
Clerk (Annual salary from July 2004 and expenses)	2,300
Councillors expenses	100
Insurance	270
Hire of Village Hall for 9 Meetings	270
Computer and printer	850
Telephone charges (and installation of new line)	500
EALC membership and other subscriptions	120
Grass cutting	200
By-election costs (*)	700
Village projects (including section 137 expenditure)	1,000

	8,310

	Total Costs	**£11,080**

* Allocation for by-election costs to go into dedicated reserve

Committee:	Resources Committee
Date:	22 January 2004
Agenda Item No:	12(i)
Title:	E-Government Task Group – Essex OnLine Virement
Author:	John Mercer (01799) 510421

1   The Council continues to actively participate in the Essex Online Partnership (EOLP) and is leading a study into the registration and authentication of online transactions. However, there have been relatively few tangible outcomes from the various EOLP projects taking place during the current financial year. As a consequence around £16,000 of the £30,000 budget will not be spent.   Instead, it is proposed to allocate part of this budget to the development of online Revenue services. This work is presently unfunded.

2   Web developers would be engaged to develop the following online functionality:

   (a)   Business Rates – The ability for any member of the public to view the rateable value of any commercial property in the district, together with the current annual charge.

   (b)   Business Rates – The ability for any business rate taxpayer to view their account details.

   (c)   Council Tax – The ability for any member of the public to view the Council Tax band of any domestic property in the district, together with the gross amount payable.

   (d)   Council Tax – The ability for any Council Tax payer to view their account details.

3   The development would include an element of user authentication to ensure that personal information can only be viewed by the relevant taxpayer.

4   The development will cost £12,000 and in order to be able to meet the cost in the current financial year it is proposed to vire £10,000 from the Essex Online Partnership capital budget to the E-Services Development (General) capital budget.

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RECOMMENDED that the sum of £10,000 be vired from the Essex Online Partnership capital budget to the E-Services Development (General) capital budget, in accordance with Financial Regulation FF3.

Committee: **RESOURCES**

Date: **22 January 2004**

Agenda Item No: 12(ii)

Title: **BEST VALUE REVIEW OF REVENUES SERVICES**

Author: **Mike Brean (01799) 510330**

MEMBER REFERENCE   **Councillor Mrs C A Bayley, Councillor R**
GROUP: **Lemon, Councillor V Lelliott and**
                              Councillor Mrs S Schneider

Summary

1   This report provides Members with full details of the Best Value Review of Revenues Services and the Anti-Fraud Team. It seeks approval and adoption of the Service Improvement Plan, which was approved by Scrutiny 2 Committee on 3 December 2003.

Best Value Review Process

2   The Terms of Reference set out the scope and coverage for the review. It followed the fundamental best value review process by using the 4 C's of compare, consult, challenge and compete. Appendix 1 explains how the 4 C's were applied to the review.

Service Improvement Plan

3   The Service Improvement Plan has been developed over the course of the review. The plan, which is at appendix 2 to this report, was endorsed by the Member Reference Work at it's meeting on 22 October 2003. The plan details both the capital and revenue costs for each objective, with total costs on the final page.

        RECOMMENDED that the Committee approve the Revenues Services Best Value Review Service Improvement Plan.

        Background Papers: Best Value Review of Revenues Services file
        (held by Mike Brean)

Compare	
Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA)	The CIPFA Benchmarking Club was subscribed to for comparative service information in respect of Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing and Council Tax Benefit. Full details are available on request. Some of the information requires further investigation and meetings are being arranged with similar sized authorities to compare data.
Essex Revenues Rating and Valuation Group	Comparative service information is provided at the meetings of this Group, held three times a year.

Consult	
Council Tax customer survey	A customer survey was carried out in August 2003. 1126 survey forms were issued and 184 returned.
Business Rates customer survey	A customer survey was carried out in July 2003. 550 survey forms were issued and 110 returned.
Housing and Council Tax Benefit	The benefits survey is triennial and is required as a Best Value Performance Indicator. The survey has to be carried out in two sampling windows. In September 2003, 490 customer survey forms were sent and 237 have been returned. The second tranche is in January 2004.
Personal caller exit survey	This involved interviewing 40 personal callers over a four-week period in September/October 2003.
Personal caller waiting times survey	Over a four-week period, an exercise was carried out to establish the waiting times of personal callers.
Results of all of the customer surveys will be brought together in the form of a booklet on completion of the benefits survey.	

Challenge	
Challenge Event	This event, which involved internal and external stakeholders and customers, was held on 25 September 2003. Discussion groups identified a number of issues, which have been included in the Service Improvement Plan (SIP).
Customer	A number of issues surrounding access were identified as in

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accessibility	need of attention. They have been included in the SIP (Aim 1) and some are now subject to discussion as part of the First Point of Contact Review Group.
Customer payments	Details of introducing payment cards at Post Offices are included in the SIP. Also, negotiations are progressing with neighbouring local authorities for them to accept payments of council tax and other debts on our behalf and vice versa. Other developments, such as automated telephone payments, automated direct debits and the direct payment of housing benefit are contained in the SIP (Aim 3). A report was produced on the discount for prompt payment of council tax and the Member Reference Group decided not to pursue this.
Peer challenge by neighbouring local authorities	Two neighbouring authorities have carried out 'Mystery shopper' exercises. The results will be included in the customer survey feedback booklet.
Peer challenge visits	Visits were made to Braintree District Council and the London Borough of Lewisham to consider the arrangements in place for dealing with customer enquiries, electronic access and overpayment recovery.
Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) Performance Standards	The DWP performance standards have been fully embraced. A self-assessment is being finalised, which will be used for the benefits service CPA. This will contribute to the overall CPA for the authority. An action plan has been developed to identify areas of weakness in the performance standards.
Information Technology (IT)	The SIP (Aim 2) covers a number of enhancements in IT to improve service delivery.
Partnership working	Various options for partnership working are covered in the SIP (Aim 5).

Compete	
Market assessment	The Member Reference Group considered a proposal for a market assessment of Revenues Services to be carried out by an external company. The findings of the CIPFA Benchmarking Club indicate that the service is very competitive in most areas. In view of this the Member Reference Group decided that the market assessment proposal would not be pursued.

Aim 1	Improve access to services

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.1	Improve Revenues reception and interviewing facilities: - • Lower level counter • Interview room • Adequate lighting • Induction loops • Security • Signage	£6 000 (Capital cost)	Adequate interviewing facilities that meet the needs of customers and comply with the Disability Discrimination Act.	2004/2005	First Point of Contact Review Group
1.2	Increase office-opening hours. Cost based on 3 members of Revenues Services staff working 4 hrs on Sat morning for 1 year.	£10 300 (Annual cost)	To give customers greater access to service.	2004/2005	First Point of Contact Review Group
1.3	Increase telephone access hours and review use of voicemail/call diversion.	Not known (FPCRG)	To give customers greater access to service.	2004/2005	First Point of Contact Review Group

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Appendix 2

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.4	Provide staff presence at Dunmow CIC. Cost based on 1 member of Revenues Services staff present for one morning per week for 1 year.	£2 250 (Ann cost)	Improved accessibility for customers living in Dunmow area of district.	27 February 2004	Sheila Adams
1.5	Maximise take up of benefit.	£1 795 (Ann cost)	To award benefit to all those entitled.	29 July 2004	Sheila Adams
1.6	Publicise Council Tax discounts and exemptions.	£1 000 (Ann cost)	To award discounts and exemptions to all those entitled.	29 July 2004	Sue Ellis
1.7	Provide facility for customers to receive information in large print, Braille or audiotape.	Not known (FPCRG)	To enable customers to understand the information that has been sent to them.	31 March 2004	First Point of Contact Review Group
1.8	Improve the standard of Benefit decision letters.	Not applicable	To enable customers to understand the information that has been sent to them.	31 January 2004	Julian Sayer

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Aim 2	Enhance Information Technology to deliver service improvement

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
2.1	Develop Revenues web page	£12 000 (Cap cost)	To enable customers to make enquiries and complete forms on line.	31 March 2004	IT section and Revenues Q/D Team
2.2	Introduce 'workflow' technology to compliment document imaging system (icluding additional VDU flat screens) Maximum cost for Benefits staff £47 720 Less DWP funding bid £41 270 Minimum cost £6 450	£47 720 * (Cap max cost) £6 450 (Cap min cost)	To enable customers to receive improved service through speedier response to enquiries and accuracy of processing claims.	2004/2005	IT section and Revenues Q/D Team
2.3	Pilot the introduction of home working Maximum capital cost £45 170 Less DWP funding bid £37 230 Minimum capital cost £7 940	£45 170 * (Cap max cost) £7 940 (Cap min cost) £4 200 (Ann cost)	To promote 'work/life' balance amongst Revenues Services staff and improve the accuracy and time taken to process claims.	June 2004	IT section

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
	Annual revenue cost £4 200				
2.4	Develop management reporting reports to assist in the speed and accuracy of processing claims and the recovery of overpayments. Maximum cost £3 000 Less DWP funding bid £2 000 Minimum cost £1 000	£3 000 * (Cap max cost) £1 000 (Cap min cost)	Improve on the speed and accuracy of processing claims and recovery of overpayments.	2004/2005	Mike Brean Julian Sayer
2.5	Create an Intranet referral form and send out email to all staff	Not applicable	To increase the ease for non-revenues staff to report suspected fraud	31 October 2003	Adrian Webb
2.6	Implementation of new server for Sx3 Revenues and Benefits computer system Maximum cost £36 000 Less DWP funding bid £24 930 Minimum cost £11 070	£36 000 * (Cap max cost) £11 070 (Cap min cost)	To increase the efficiency of the computer system in dealing with customer enquiries and processing of work	2004/2005	FOX IT Julian Sayer

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Aim 3	Introduce new and improved methods of administering and making payment

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
3.1	Introduction of payment card for cash payers at Post Offices	£850 (Cap cost) £400 (Ann cost)	Increased methods of payment and much needed business for Post Offices.	31 January 2004	Sue Ellis Julian Sayer Denise Greenwood
3.2	Automated telephone payments (ATP)	£10 000 (Cap cost) £1 500 (Ann cost)	Improve payment collection method.	2004/2005	IT Section
3.3	Introduce automated Direct Debit set up (AUDDIS), amendments and cancellations (ADDACS).	£3 000 (Cap cost)	Increased efficiency of Direct Debit payment administration.	ADDACS 31 May 2004 AUDDIS 31 Dec 2004	Julian Sayer IT Section
3.4	Introduce direct payment of Housing Benefit	Not applicable	Increased efficiency of Housing Benefit payments and more secure method of payment to reduce fraud.	October 2004	IT Section Phil O'Dell Julian Sayer

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Aim 4	Introduce the Department for Work and Pensions Performance Standards

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
4.1	Implement DWP Performance Standards in benefits administration	Not applicable	To conform to national standards and prepare for CPA.	31 March 2004	Mike Brean Sheila Adams Sue Mustill
4.2	Submit Fraud Policy to Resources Committee for approval	Not applicable	To obtain formal approval for the use of sanctions	20 November 2003	John Mercer Adrian Webb
4.3	Finalise and issue Code of Conduct to Investigators	Not applicable	To ensure all investigators know the boundaries within which they must operate.	30 November 2003	John Mercer Adrian Webb
4.4	Register all qualified Authorised Officers with Counter fraud Investigation Branch	Not applicable	To conform to national standards and prepare for CPA.	30 September 2003	Adrian Webb
4.5	Produce an Authorised Officer request form with an area for the outcome of the authorisation.	Not applicable	To conform to national standards and prepare for CPA. To ensure authorised powers are being used appropriately	30 September 2003	Adrian Webb

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
			and achieve their objectives.		
4.6	Analyse the Administrative Penalty recovery rate for 2002/03.	Not applicable	To evaluate the effectiveness of this sanction	31 October 2003	Adrian Webb Matt Southall
4.7	Agree a policy with Revenues for regular feedback on the recovery of Administrative Penalty debts	Not applicable	To enable monitoring of the effectiveness of the sanction	31 October 2003	Adrian Webb Mike Brean
4.8	Review all fraud policies on an annual basis	Not applicable	To ensure appropriateness of the policy and to achieve an above standard	31 January 2004	Adrian Webb

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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Aim 5	Use partnership arrangements to deliver improved levels of service

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
5.1	Pilot Revenues Services staff presence on mobile library service. One member of staff for 8 weeks.	£375 (Ann cost)	Improved accessibility for customers in outlying areas of district.	27 February 2004	Sue Ellis
5.2	Enable customers to pay Council Tax and other debts at Braintree, East Herts and South Cambs Councils.	Not known	Improved accessibility for customers in outlying areas of district.	2004/2005	Denise Greenwood IT Section
5.3	Investigate the feasibility of Business Rates joint working arrangements.	Not known	To provide business continuity to vulnerable area of Revenues Services.	2005/2006	Mike Brean Adrian Marsh
5.4	Explore potential data matching partnership opportunities with neighbouring authorities	Not known	To identify UDC benefit claimants who are working in another authorities area in such employment as taxi drivers.	31 December 2003	Adrian Webb John Mercer
5.5	Pursue joint working initiatives with Counter Fraud Investigation Service as appropriate	Not applicable	To promote joint working and to enable skills transfer between organisations	On-going	Adrian Webb
5.6	Consider joint working arrangements for the Anti-Fraud Team.	Not known	To obtain economies of scale and provide cover for limited resources	31 December 2003	John Mercer Adrian Webb

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

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	Aim 6	Training and information

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
6.1	Fraud Awareness and Induction Training with 6 monthly follow-up sessions	Not applicable	To increase staff awareness of fraud and how to report suspicions	December 2003	John Mercer
6.2	Produce a quarterly fraud newsletter for Council staff	Not applicable	To provide feedback on the work of the Anti Fraud Team	31 December 2003	Adrian Webb
6.3	Produce fraud referral source statistics on a quarterly basis and analyse for trends and good/poor levels of referrals	Not applicable	To enable positive feedback to those people who are providing high quality referrals and to enable proactive training and reminders for those people who are not providing a reasonable number of referrals	31 December 2003	Adrian Webb
6.4	Submit an annual fraud report to Members	Not applicable	To provide feedback and information on the success of the team	31 December 2003	John Mercer Adrian Webb
6.5	Introduce the training evaluation documentation provided by Personnel	Not applicable	To enable training providers and courses to be evaluated for future use	30 September 2003	Adrian Webb

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

14 January 2004

Item	Objective	Estimated Cost	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
6.6	Establish a corporate Anti Fraud training plan to include training provider and dates	Not applicable	To enable monitoring of courses attended, providers and cost	31 December 2003	Adrian Webb

Estimated expenditure of service improvement plan objectives		
Capital		Revenue
Maximum (without DWP funding)	Minimum (with DWP funding)	
£163 740	£26 460	£21 820

* DWP funding bid to be made to meet some of the cost

14 January 2004

Committee:	**Resources Committee**
Date:	**22 January 2004**
Agenda Item No:	**13**
Title:	**Staffing Update**
Author:	**Carole Hughes (01799) 510407**

Summary

1   The table below shows each vacancy that has arisen since the last date of the table prepared for Resources Committee. It shows the date the vacancy arose, the job title, the relevant Service and the decision taken. The decision taken section refers to whether the vacancy was to be advertised and recruited to and on what basis or whether it is frozen.

Date	Job Title	Service	Decision
24/11/03	Recycling Loader	DSO	To advertise and recruit on a permanent basis
24/11/03	HGV Driver	DSO	Ditto
1/12/03	Mechanical Sweeper Driver	DSO	Ditto
8/12/03	Assistant Steward	Office Services	Ditto
8/12/03	Housing Officer	Housing	Ditto
22/12/03	Clerical Assistant	Revenues	Ditto
05/01/04	Planning Officers x 2	Planning	Ditto
05/01/04	Recycling Loader	DSO	Ditto
05/01/04	Parking Enforcement Manager	C & L	Ditto

Background Papers: Resources Committee Meetings
                                          Vacancy recruiting forms

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