

Item 4(i) - Report previously considered at Health and Housing committee

Committee: Health and Housing
Date: 3 March 2005
Agenda Item No: 4
Title: Fees and Charges Review
Author: Diane Burrige (01799) 510580

Summary

- 1 A review of our fees and charges appropriate to this committee has been undertaken and the proposed revised charges are attached to this report.

Background

- 2 Fees and Charges have not been subject to annual review or inflationary increase and in some instances have fallen behind those of other providers.

Review of policy/structure

- 3 A benchmarking exercise has been undertaken and some opportunities for improvement in our pricing policy have been identified under the following headings.

(1.) Pest Control

To be consistent with the charging for rat and mice treatment in commercial premises a commercial rate is now proposed for wasp treatment.

(2.) Border Inspection Post

Our benchmarking exercise has shown a diverse structure of fees. Any pricing structure for this service should recoup the cost of provision and it is recommended that we move to the per consignment charge operated by East Midlands Airport. This is simpler than the weight related structure and closer reflects the evenness of the work involved.

(3.) Micro-chipping of pets

It is proposed that a new rate is established to offer this service at a lower charge to residents in receipt of means tested benefit and those aged 65 years or over. The Animal Warden is keen to take a more pro-active approach to encourage pet owners to have their pets micro-chipped. Keeping the service affordable and offering promotional events will support this aim.

Revised Fees and Charges

- 4 Benchmark data has been analysed and is shown on the attached spreadsheets. Each sheet shows our 2004/5 charges and a summary of current charges from other providers under headings of "Highest", "Lowest"

and “Average” over the benchmark range. The fees charged by Uttlesford have not been included with these ranges.

In consultation with our officers, utilising their knowledge of services a recommended fee is offered in the final column.

RECOMMENDED that,

- a) Members approve the pricing policy additions and changes.
- b) Members consider and approve the proposed fees and charges for 2005/6.

Background Papers: None

Minute taken from the Health and Housing Committee 3 March 2005.

HH60 FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW

The Executive Manager (Environment and Cultural Services) invited Members to consider the report containing a proposed review of fees and charges which had remained at the same level for some years. The review had been prepared following benchmarking exercises with a view to submitting appropriate recommendations to the Resources Committee and Council.

The report also recommended additions and changes to pricing policy as regards Pest Control, Border Inspection Post charges and charges for micro-chipping of pets.

Members were mindful of the need to bring the Council's fees and charges and pricing policy and structure into line with those of other Councils, and having regard to the recent benchmarking exercise, to balance the need to recover the cost of service provision with the need in particular to provide affordable services for needy recipients

They discussed the possible impact of the reviewed fees and charges, and it was noted that the Committee's financial targets would be met. The Executive Manager (Environment and Cultural Services) agreed to investigate who was responsible for the licensing of slaughter houses and cinemas.

RECOMMENDED to the Resources Committee that approval be given to the proposed fees and charges for 2005/6 and the pricing policy additions and changes relating to pest control, fee structure for the Border Inspection Post and the micro-chipping of pets.

Committee: RESOURCES
Date: 31 March 2005
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: ACCESS TO SERVICES BEST VALUE REVIEW
Author: Executive Management Team

MEMBER REFERENCE GROUP: Councillor Mrs E Godwin, Councillor J Ketteridge, Councillor V Lelliott and Councillor W Bowker

Summary

- 1 Improving access to value for money services is a key aim of the Council, which originated from the Quality of Life corporate plan. The access to services best value review set out to examine how Uttlesford citizens accessed the Council's services and the opportunities available for providing more choice, improved service and greater integration with other agencies. The review concentrated on the citizen's 'first point of contact' with the Council and covered a number of access channels.
- 2 The review presented an overall picture of dedicated staff providing good, customer focused services to the public. However, the picture is somewhat patchy and the overall quality and performance of customer services is probably only just good enough. Increasingly, customers expect the Council to match the quality of service provided by the best of the private and public sector. Also, customers expect choice, both in the way and the times that they access services. This is particularly important in such a large, rural area with limited public transport and where many residents live considerable distances from council offices or are at work during office opening hours.
- 3 It is important to note that external inspections have confirmed that the service provided to customers is mixed and can be improved: -
 - The User Focus inspection highlighted the lack of corporate strategic coordination of user-focused activity. The Council will be seeking to improve consultation, communication, research and equality and diversity issues as a result. The inspection pointed to the access to services review as a positive basis for moving key aspects of user focus forward;
 - The planning service has been assessed by the audit commission as providing a fair service with promising prospects for improvement. The inspectors said that staff are focussing on the customer and are all aware of the importance of improvement and there are some formal arrangements in place to ensure customer needs are met. However, the inspectors made reference to the fact that customer satisfaction had

declined since the last survey in 2002 and the reasons are not known. Also that there were no up to date customer service standards with access to the service limited to the website and the offices at Dunmow and Saffron Walden;

- The Audit Commission's Comprehensive Performance Assessment found that it was difficult to demonstrate quality in some services but that public satisfaction in others was high. It also found that hard-to-reach groups were poorly served, with the exception of young people, and disabled access would not reach the required standards.

Integrated Customer Management

- 4 The Member workshop on 8 December 2004 considered an options appraisal report. Following this, a service improvement plan (appendix 1) was developed, which has been reviewed by the Executive Management Team (EMT). EMT has agreed the vision for customer services, which is 'to deliver a 'right first time, every time' customer service that makes it easier for people to access the council'. The vision is set out in the customer service strategy, which can be found on the staff and Member intranet.
- 5 EMT recognises that the council can make improvements to its customer service and has identified a number of critical success factors for improvement from both an organisational and customer point of view. These are summarised in the following table: -

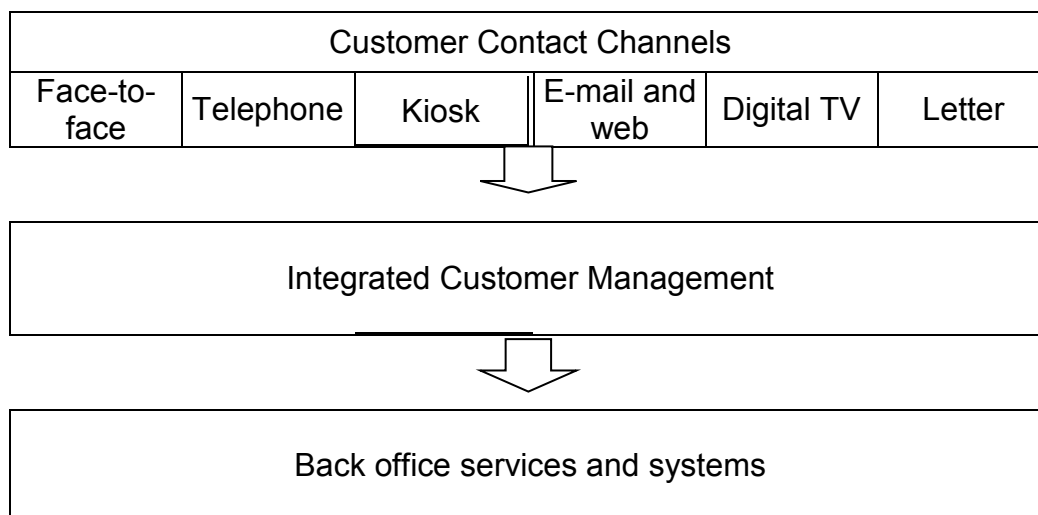
Critical success factors	
Organisational	Customer
Consistency of response	Giving the right answer (complete transaction)
Increasing customer and staff satisfaction	First point of contact to deal with enquiry
Cross departmental working	Quickly
Building knowledge (resolving enquiries)	Politely
Clear lines of responsibility	Give customer choice of access channels
Integration and enhancement of CICs	Never being lost/forgotten
Seamless experience	Getting the right person
24/7 customer service	Cheap call
Quick effective sorting of enquiries	Not on hold
Measurability	Follow up
Sustainable/resilient	
Better use of back office	
Optimum use of resources (lower transaction costs)	
Eliminate duplication/waste	
Working with hard to reach groups	
Understanding (knowledge/geography)	

Critical success factors	
Organisational	Customer
Proactive solutions	
Customers aware that monitoring is happening	
Simple complaints	

- 6 To achieve the above success factors, the council needs to move towards a system of Integrated Customer Management (ICM). This means that customers dealing with the council should have a common experience and level of service regardless of which service they are seeking or which access channel they choose to use. Achieving this requires the development of common processes, systems and standards across the whole organisation.
- 7 ICM will take place across all types of services and different access channels. This will allow the council to join up service delivery so that services can be 'bundled' in ways that better suit customers' needs. For example, a customer with a multiple enquiry should be able to contact one person to get an answer. Also, someone self-serving on the internet should expect information given as part of the enquiry to be updated on the council's records.
- 8 The relationship between the front and the back office will be key to the successful operation of ICM. All processes both in the front and back office will be re-engineered so that duplication of resources is minimised. This will require a major effort on the part of staff and managers to achieve, but will enable the council to deal with customer transactions quickly and cheaply providing good value for money services. It will also release specialist staffing resources to deal with more complex enquiries. ICM will mean integrated access, integrated services and integrated service delivery. Achieving this level of integration means thinking of the way the council delivers services entirely from the customer's perspective.
- 9 ICM will entail linking up information on people and properties so that we gain an understanding of the whole range of contacts an individual has with the organisation— how they use services and what opportunities there might be to tailor or bundle services to meet their needs. Every customer contact will be recorded through the customer relationship management system and by integration with back office systems so that up to date information is retained for all customers. All such integration of data will, of course, be carried out in compliance with the Data Protection Act and other legislation and regulation regarding the holding and transmission of personal information.
- 10 It is envisaged that the customer will have one single point of (real or virtual) contact for access to all services. This is likely to be through as many access channels as possible including telephone, letter, e-mail, internet and face-to-face. Notwithstanding the growth of the web, for the foreseeable future phone access will be the major contact medium. Along with face-to-face contact, this is also vital to ensure social inclusion for those who are unable or unwilling to

make use of new means of communication.

- 11 The council does not propose to introduce a call centre, but through ICM it is probable that we will move towards a customer service centre. For the avoidance of doubt and to be certain about what is not being proposed appendix 2 sets out the distinct differences between a call centre and a customer service centre.
- 12 The end point to the ICM process is a council that represents a total transformation in the way front and back office services are delivered and the way that the organisation works. The diagram below illustrates this: -



Customer Relationship Management System

- 13 The customer relationship management (CRM) system will be used to handle all customer contact with the council. It will be kept up to date by integration with back office systems and by staff updating customer records when contact is made. The Council has already invested in the CRM software: demonstrations have been given to some staff and further demonstrations are proposed. There are likely to be opportunities for its partial implementation ahead of any major change programme.
- 14 The CRM system will allow enquiry handling to be dealt with in a consistent manner through scripting of frequently asked queries and questions. This will involve business process re-engineering and the development of process maps for all front and back office operations.
- 15 Integration of the CRM system with back office applications such as Ocella and Sx3 will be crucial to the successful operation of Integrated Customer Management. For example, a customer who wants to set up payment of a debt by direct debit will have the details entered on the CRM system, which will then update back office systems through software integration.

Partnership Working

- 16 Consideration has been given to developing a partnership arrangement with Braintree District Council for them to provide a telephone customer service centre facility for this Council. Meetings between the representatives from the two Councils have taken place and both were very keen to explore the full potential of this arrangement. One of the representatives from Braintree Council is a consultant employed solely to introduce e-Government projects and was therefore able to give an independent view on the proposal. After lengthy discussions, it was established that the partnership proposal was unsuitable for the following reasons: -
- a. If a customer service centre was introduced, telephone and face-to-face customer service centre staff would be interchangeable and rotate between service centre functions. This flexibility would not be available if the telephone customer service centre was located in Braintree;
 - b. Both Councils have purchased different customer relationship management (CRM) systems to deal with customer enquiries;
 - c. Braintree staff would have to be trained up on 2 different CRM systems;
 - d. There is a risk that the Council will lose its identity and there may be operational problems with the telephone service being remotely located at Braintree. There may be cost savings and improved efficiency if located in Braintree but this has to be considered against better effectiveness if under the control of this Council;
 - e. Uttlesford Council would have to transfer, or make redundant, over 20 staff in order to meet the estimated ongoing costs required by Braintree District Council to operate the telephone customer service centre;
 - f. Problems would be caused due to the different approaches the Councils were taking in implementing the CRM systems. Uttlesford are intending to use a 'narrow and deep' approach to dealing with customer enquiries whereas Braintree is employing a 'wide and shallow' approach.
- 17 Although a telephone customer service centre partnership arrangement is not feasible, both Councils have identified areas where they can benefit from joint working for example in CRM process mapping, re-engineering and customer care skills training.
- 18 It has also been agreed that both councils will make available to each other the full experience and learning that arises from the differing approaches on the basis that though the routes chosen by the two councils differ, the intended destination is the same.

Human Resources

- 19 Subject to the recommendations in this report being approved, a full project plan will be developed which sets out the means by which all staff will be engaged in the phased introduction of the Integrated Customer Management approach. This will involve:
- A service by service identification of systems and processes within the organisation;
 - Identification of the key points of contact between those systems/process and the customer;
 - Assessment of the current levels of demand being placed on those contact points and the nature of the demand (e.g how many visitors does a certain counter receive, who are they, what do they want?).
 - Assessment of the optimum division of responsibility for those systems/processes between customer service specialists and professionally specialised staff;
- 20 All staff and managers will be able, and be expected, to contribute to this process. Throughout the exercise opportunities will be identified to improve efficiency, economy and effectiveness within the systems and processes being identified. These opportunities will be taken, and are likely to require changes to staff numbers and structures. If there is a wholesale move of services to a Customer Service Centre it is estimated that 20 FTE staff from existing frontline services would form the customer advisor team for the proposed customer service centre, made up of a face-to-face and telephone customer service centre plus the existing community information centres. Supervisory staff will also be drawn from existing frontline staffing resources.

Accommodation

- 19 Preliminary work indicates that a customer service centre could be located within the council offices in London Road, but no decision on location or accommodation can be made until the process of assessment is much further advanced.

Communication and consultation

- 20 It should be noted that extensive information relating to the review, including the terms of reference, results of consultation exercises, feedback from recent staff workshops, notes of the meeting with critical friends, the options appraisal report, notes from the Member workshop held on 8 December 2004 and details of PowerPoint presentations is available on both the staff and Member intranet.
- 21 The views from staff so far are mixed. Some have embraced and supported the concept, whereas others disagree in principle. The main questions have however been around the practicalities of implementation. Many councils have, or are in the process of introducing similar initiatives to ICM and have had to address the same issues raised by staff that have concerns. It is not possible to work through every detail up front, but the experience faced by other councils will be used to ensure implementation is successful. Unison has prepared a detailed response which raised a large number of issues.

This response, and the response of EMT to those concerns is attached at appendix 3.

- 22 Further staff workshops were held on 17, 18 and 21 March 2005 to communicate the concept of ICM. Again, comments received at those workshops are available on the staff and Members intranet.

Implementation

- 23 A detailed implementation plan will be developed subject to Member approval of the recommendations contained in this report. Also, comprehensive project plans will be produced for each key aspect of ICM. It is intended to implement changes on a phased basis, adopting an evidence-based approach. Our service processes will have to be re-engineered towards a more customer-focussed way of working.
- 24 As part of the implementation of ICM, we will have to develop comprehensive and robust ways to measure performance against customer care standards so that we can measure how customer service and accessibility has improved.
- 25 Project management of ICM is key and it is proposed that EMT will form the project board. Two temporary officers will be recruited for a period of 18 months to assist with the implementation of ICM.
- 26 It is proposed that the e-Government Task Group is given the responsibility of monitoring the progress of the project. Also, regular progress reports will be made to Resources and Scrutiny 2 Committees.
- 27 It is intended that the Best Value Officer Group continue throughout the duration of the project so providing each Executive Unit with an access to services officer champion.

Financial Implications

- 28 The Council, at its meeting on 15 February 2005, approved the amount of £330,000 for capital expenditure in 2005/06 relating to the access to services project. There is some revenue expenditure associated with the project amounting to £25 000 in 2006/07 (pro rata for 2005/06). This could possibly rise to £45 000 in following years as customer service advisors progress through their career grade. However, based on experiences at other Councils that have implemented an Integrated Customer Management approach, it is likely that improved operational efficiencies will be realised such that the first year cost of £25 000 could be maintained or even reduced without adverse effects on services or individual members of staff. The service improvement plan details the capital and revenue cost for each objective, with total costs for each on the final page.

RECOMMENDED that

- i The Committee approve an Integrated Customer Management approach to customer service delivery.
- ii That additional revenue expenditure of £25 000 per annum be built into the base budget with appropriate part year effect for 2005/06 and full provision in following years, pending identification of any compensating efficiencies during operation that can keep costs to £25 000 or even less.
- iii The Committee approve the access to services best value review service improvement plan.
- iv The Executive Management Team becomes the project board for implementation of Integrated Customer Management.
- v The Executive Management Team develops a comprehensive implementation plan.
- vi The e-Government Task Group monitors the progress of the project.
- vii Progress is regularly reported to this committee and Scrutiny 2 Committee.

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim 1	Amalgamation of all customer enquiry and reception points into one telephone and face-to-face customer service centre in Saffron Walden offices
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Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Estimated Revenue Cost 2006-07 (pro rata 2005-06)	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.1	Facility refit – Saffron Walden offices.	£70 000		Provide face-to-face and telephone customer service centre facility so that 80% of enquiries are dealt with at the first point of contact. Ensure that the needs of disadvantaged groups are recognised and taken account of. Ensure that requirements in relation to the Disability Discrimination Act are complied with.	2005-07	Access to Services Project Team
1.2	Facility refit – CICs.	£20 000				
1.3	Project team staffing requirements.	£82 000				
1.4	Telephony upgrades.	£20 000	£3 000			
1.5	IT upgrades.	£8 000	£2 000			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Estimated Revenue Cost 2006-07 (pro rata 2005-06)	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.6	Initial staff training and development.	£20 000	£6 000			
1.7	Produce staffing structure. Staff to be transferred from existing services to customer service centre. Revenue cost relates to anticipated increase in salary levels following job evaluation of Customer Service Advisor position.	Not applicable	£14 000			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Estimated Revenue Cost 2006-07 (pro rata 2005-06)	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
1.8	Carry out analysis of proportion of front line enquiries dealt with by each service.	Not applicable				
Total		£220 000	£25 000			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim 2	Integrate Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system into customer service centre, community information centres and citizen advice bureau offices
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Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
2.1	Develop enquiry-handling scripts.	£100 000	To provide staff and CAB advisors with the technology to handle customer enquiries efficiently and effectively.	2005-07	Access to Services Project Team
2.2	Integrate with back office systems: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sx3; • Ocella; • Torex. 				
2.3	System administration training.				
Total		£100 000			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim 3	Cashless Council
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Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
3.1	Introduce automated telephone payments.	£10 000	Provide customers with facility to make payment 24/7.	2005-06	Access to Services Project Team
3.2	Carry out feasibility study into the introduction of a smart card.	Not applicable	Improved method of making payment.	2006-07	Access to Services Project Team
3.3	Introduce automated Direct Debit set up (AUDDIS), amendments and cancellations (ADDACS).	Cost already included in budget and e-Govt funded	Increased efficiency of Direct Debit payment administration.	30 June 2005	Access to Services Project Team
Total		£10 000			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim 4	Corporate Document Imaging
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Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
4.1	Roll out document imaging to remaining services, including provision of corporate site licence.	Cost already included in budget and e-Govt funded	Customer enquiries to be dealt with more efficiently.	2006-07	Access to Services Project Team
Total		£0			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim 5	Partnership working
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Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
5.1	CRM Process mapping and re engineering.	Not applicable	Economies realised in sharing resources and best practice.	2005-07	Access to Services Project Team
5.2	Customer Care Standards.				
5.3	Customer Care skills training.				
5.4	Management of change organisational development.				
5.5	Contact Centre staff recruitment.				
Total					

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim 6	General
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Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
6.1	Introduce customer service strategy.	Not applicable	Customers and staff will be aware of the Council's policy on handling contact with the public and it's approach to customer service and care.	31 March 2005	Executive Manager – Customer Services
6.2	Corporate branding of leaflets	Negligible	Information and advice on all Council services available in consistent and varying formats.	2005-06	Access to Services Project Team
6.3	Standardisation of office opening hours	Not applicable	Ensure that office opening hours are the same for all Council services.		
6.4	Review direct dial numbers	Not applicable	Customers know which number to ring to access Council services.		

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Item	Detail	Estimated Capital Cost 2005-06	Desired Outcome	Target Completion Date	Responsible officer and major contributors
6.5	Review specialist surgeries	Not applicable	Determine the need for specialist surgeries in the light of CRM integration in the CICs.		
6.6	Website development.	Cost already included in budget and e-Govt funded	Increase information available for customers to self serve		
6.7	Implement Digital TV.				
6.8	SMS text messaging.				
6.9	Introduce public access kiosks.				
6.10	Ensure that information is available in large print, Braille, audiocassette or different languages.	Not applicable	Information and advice on all Council services available in consistent and varying formats.	2005-07	
Total		£0			

Access to services Best Value Review

Service Improvement Plan

Aim	Capital Cost 2005-06	Revenue Cost 2006-07 (pro rata for 2005-06)
1	£220 000	£25 000
2	£100 000	£0
3	£10 000	£0
4	£0	£0
5	£0	£0
6	£0	£0
Total	£330 000	£25 000

Private sector call centre	Uttlesford's approach
Predominantly stand alone	Highly integrated with Council services
Cost driven	Quality driven
Increases revenue	Improves efficiency
Anonymous, functionally based	Ambassador for Council services
Transaction process centre	Customer relationship management centre
Principally based around the telephone	Full, multi-media capability as standard
Basic skills, close supervision	Highly skilled, empowered people
Aims to identify most valued customers	Aims to provide improved services to customers
Provides services to keep customers returning	Aims to minimise the number of times a citizen/customer interacts with a council
Identifies new service offerings	Provides the customer/citizen with a single view of the council

Appendix 3: Comments made by Unison, and EMT's response

	Unison comment	EMT response
1	It believed that the survey received a low response rate. On any survey the lower the response rate, the more likely it is that results would not accurately represent all the groups in the survey population. Can such a large and expensive initiative be based on one survey?	<p>The presentation gave a summary of the survey information. It is more important that the sample is representative rather than the size. There was more than one survey carried out as part of the review. They were: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mystery shopping exercise; • Staff questionnaire survey; • Citizens Panel survey; • Uttlesford Life survey; • Data from other councils similar in make up to UDC <p>Full details of the staff surveys conducted will be posted onto the intranet. Also, recent inspections by external bodies such as the audit commission have confirmed that there are weaknesses in customer service delivery.</p>
2	'Mystery shopping' offers important feedback on both customer service and the level of accuracy of answers to enquiries. Whilst this highlighted errors and inaccuracies in our staff responses, it also highlighted a need for good, ongoing general training across the board.	This is very true. It is recognised that ongoing training is crucial to ensuring staff are keep up to date with changes in legislation and procedures. The CRM system, through enquiry handling scripts, will provide customers with a consistent and accurate response.
3	Would it not have been more constructive to have involved all staff in early consultation, especially those departments directly affected as the feedback and local knowledge would be invaluable to forming a successful contact point. It is also easier to promote a new initiative with staff feeling involved and having a sense of ownership.	A best value officer group was set up at the start of the review. Members of the group visited other councils to see how they dealt with customer enquiries. Workshops were held on 29 September and 1 October 2004 to seek views from staff. Staff were also invited to demonstrations of the CRM system. The results of the consultation exercises and surveys were used to produce an options appraisal report, which was presented to Members on 8 December 2004.
4	New contact point at existing offices would still leave us with parking problems and frustrations for the public.	The location of any customer service centre is still to be decided.
5	At what point will be initiative be made public knowledge. We already receive public reports of criticism and dissatisfaction in local papers, for example recent criticism on the cost of the Quality of Life Plan. When will we be in a position to qualify the expense of a new contact point?	Improving access to value for money services is an objective in the Quality of Life corporate plan. This is a public document widely distributed throughout the district. Criticism of what we do is an inevitable feature of being a public organisation. Detailed costings for the customer service centre (if introduced) will be produced for each location option.
6	One of the strong points UDC currently has is its links and close proximity (geographically) to the town and its community. It would be a great shame if this was lost or damaged.	The access to services review proposes to improve and increase the access channels available for people to contact the council.

7	To invest a large amount of money now in something which could become a white elephant or need vast improvement in the near future at high cost would not enamour us to our council tax papers.	The review confirmed that the current arrangements are unsatisfactory. The costings so far produced relate to a revamp of the existing reception area and interviewing facilities.
8	Have our stakeholders/public been consulted about what they may see is wrong with Council services?	See 1 above.
9	The Council is taking a major risk in improving something that isn't broken if there is not the level of complaints to justify this expense.	The council is aiming for continuous improvement in service delivery. Customers complain because letters are not answered on time or not at all and if they have problems in trying to contact someone. It is accepted that the vast majority of people who are dissatisfied do not actually complain. We should be encouraging more people to complain. We also don't get many compliments about the way we deliver customer services.
10	Generic working in Revenues and Benefits had not been a success. This is not a dissimilar idea, therefore how can this be a success?	Those members of staff that were in Revenues in 1998 will remember that generic working was introduced following the loss of a number of staff through the re-structuring of the service and the introduction of new technology in the form of document imaging. Staff were expected to deal with the whole range of council tax and benefits work. Any customer service centre would be dealing with routine enquiries with the use of the CRM system and enquiry handling scripts. Having said that, some staff do still work generically in revenues. The model envisaged has been successful in many other councils: managers are confident that we can deliver similar success at Uttlesford and can see no reason why staff should not have similar confidence in their ability to do so.
11	Moral is already low. Uncertainty and instability would have a bad effect on staff.	This will provide an opportunity for some staff to carry out work which is more varied. Comments from staff that are most likely to be directly affected have been refreshingly positive.
12	With reference to changes in terms and conditions, what would happen to current team leaders' posts which would lose staff and part of their work.	The next stage involves teams and their leaders/EMT/Project Team working together to map out their services. During this period many jobs will develop a new focus or may as a result of any integrated customer management disappear to be replaced with new roles. The need for team leaders will continue in both front and back office functions and yes it will be the same for team leaders as it will be for their team members. They may not be doing the same as they do now but there will certainly be comparable work to be done. The project isn't about reducing access to supervision or the number of supervisors but it may change who you supervise and who supervises you.

13	How would decisions be made as to who goes into first point of contact and who stays in existing section?	There will need to be selection and decision making both for where jobs sit, front or back or both etc and how roles as they are identified should be best filled. The project role out will be phased and much of the next stage will be undertaken in teams. Teams will be able to advise how they feel the selection will work best. It is much better for teams to know they will have a role in making suggestions than fixing the decision making process now. Whatever approach(s) is recommended and adopted it/they will have to be fair, open, objective, supportive and reasonable for all involved.
14	How would first point of contact provide as good a service when we would only be able to skim the surface of several departments' work?	Research has shown that 80% of enquiries to a council are simple queries taking 4 mins to answer, 16% are more complex queries taking 45 mins and 4% are significant queries taking up to 3 days to resolve. The CRM system, through enquiry handling scripts, will enable up to 80% of calls to be dealt with at the first point of contact. At the moment specialist staff have to deal with routine enquiries. First point of contact will provide a more optimum use of resources. Some services do not provide a quality customer service at the moment.
15	The workload of the duty officer, who currently deals with more complex planning queries, would increase.	From speaking to other councils, first point of contact filters routine calls allowing specialist officers to concentrate on more complex enquiries.
16	Is this really what the public want? We receive many favourable comments from the public on the service we provide and are informed that this is not always the case at other councils they visit.	Customer surveys and recent external inspections confirm that we need to improve our customer service. The service provided by all departments is not consistent nor of a high enough standard.
17	Reliability of computer service. If yet more information is going to be provided on the computer and having experienced computer breakdowns when trying to serve the public, what backup procedures will be in place to deal with breakdowns to ensure continuity of service?	We are currently reviewing all aspects of IT service delivery and developing an IT strategy so that systems will be more robust in the future.
18	With regard to the Planning Information desk, the facilities offered with the new proposals would not be adequate to deal with the number and type of enquiries we deal with at the moment.	A number of options have been suggested for the location of any customer service centre. These have developed over the course of the staff presentations. The location has still to be decided and further discussion will take place on this.
19	Council tax payers should be consulted – wrapping these call centre proposals in a title of 'first point of contact centre' is cheating the public. They would still be passed from pillar to post if they have complex multi queries. Can we see the actual questions these 50 persons were asked and their replies please?	Please see item 1 regarding consultation. All responses are available from Denise Greenwood.

20	Statistics – how accurate are they, over what period and how were they compiled? 88,000 visits to the offices per year? That equates to 349 per day or 41 per hour!	These figures were provided by the staff at the various reception and cash desks. More rigorous assessments of the level of visits will be made as the project plan develops.
21	Fail to see how the public will get a better service other than the current DDI system where the public get to speak to the person who had sent out the communication in the first place.	The service that customers receive at the moment varies across the whole council. Some of the calls to current DDI numbers are routine and taken by specialist staff. Also, members of staff who use DDI numbers are not always available resulting in a message being taken by someone else or the caller being passed onto another member of staff as it is a multiple enquiry.
22	There does not appear to be sufficient justification through lack of customer satisfaction to justify the large upheaval involved with the proposals.	This concern has been covered in a number of responses above.
23	The two proposed schemes involving reception in the 'new' building does not seem to take the disruption of key services into account.	See 18 above. Any accommodation changes will have to be well planned and managed.
24	Has the implementation of a call centre been proven to be what the public wants?	The council is not proposing to introduce a call centre. A customer service centre will focus on quality and consistency in dealing with enquiries. The public want a quick and consistent response to enquiries from any council dept they may contact. They are not getting this at the moment.
25	Possible ongoing costs have not all been taken into account and the subsequent potential increase in Council Tax, particularly as we already spend up to CAP.	The ongoing revenue costs are £25 000. This covers staff training, ongoing IT and telephony costs plus an assumption that staff will progress through the customer advisor positions as they become more proficient.
26	The lack of detailed thinking as to the implementation of the proposals – should this not have been thought about prior to holding staff briefings? This demonstrates the need for more research before a decision is made.	Management cannot resolve all detailed questions of implementation before beginning the process of communication and consultation. A detailed implementation plan will be produced if Members approve the concept. Staff were informed at the presentations that such a plan would be produced if Committee approved the concept. Also, staff were informed that this was an 18 month project and EM's, line managers and all staff affected would be consulted over what proportion of work was front office and the phasing of services.

27	<p>If following the lack of (or potentially flawed) research we do not have an accurate assessment of where we currently are in relation to our services and how the public perceive these, it would not be possible to assess what needs to be done to improve the service we provide. Any changes put in place now would be compared to the current situation which may well not be an accurate picture. The proposed scheme may or may not compare favourably once it is up and running but any comparison would be inaccurate.</p>	<p>See previous comments about the need to improve customer service and results from consultation exercises and external assessments.</p>
28	<p>The report to Members appeared to be one sided in not specifically addressing staff concerns. Although the information on the Intranet may be drawn to their attention, there was no guarantee that they would read it. The report should at least attempt to openly address all points and concerns raised.</p>	<p>This document will be an appendix to the report. Most of the concerns raised in individual staff sessions have been covered here.</p>
29	<p>We are all public servants and we must strive towards delivering services to the highest standards. Uttlesford prides itself on being a personable Council and the small size of the Council enables most officers to know each other, which does not happen in much larger organisations. The examples quoted at the presentation seemed to relate to much larger Councils of more than 500 people. Braintree for example has, I believe, 900 employees, three times as many as Uttlesford.</p>	<p>Visits were made to a number of councils, not just Braintree. One, Three Rivers District Council has 350 staff and a population of 83,000.</p>
30	<p>It was suggested that 80% of enquiries would be dealt with within the CRM system. The training budget was apparently £20k. Can we really train 20 CRM people to answer questions to a high standard on every section of the Council within 18 months and on a budget of £20k? If the 20 full time equivalents were all part time, then there would be a need to train 40 staff!</p>	<p>An analysis of staff affected has to be carried out. However, some staff already have a broad knowledge of services in the jobs that they currently do. The CRM system will enable staff to answer enquiries efficiently and consistently.</p>
31	<p>In terms of location of the contact centre, it should not diminish the quality of existing office space. The existing reception area could be altered to cater for this new facility, if it really was necessary at all.</p>	<p>Noted and see previous comments regarding the location options.</p>

32	As part of the original accommodation working group, a great deal of time was spent in ensuring that people had the opportunity to comment about their needs and feelings etc BEFORE making any recommendations. I am disappointed that the consultation process with staff has come at the eleventh hour and staff comments appear to being ignored or omitted from the final report to Members.	The accommodation working group were aware that the access to services review could impact on their review. Members at the workshop on 8 December 2004 indicated the way forward with the access to services review. The accommodation working group lead officer was consulted following this in January 2005. Members are not being asked to consider any accommodation implications arising out of the review.
33	It was reported that the report was already 40 pages long and it would not be feasible to include all comments. It was said that staff comments would be added on the website and members pointed in the direction of this. I am very concerned that staff comments were being totally ignored and the whole process was being rushed through to get to 31 March meeting. I am also concerned that the content of the report may not be a real reflection of staff feeling and surely it would be inappropriate to encourage member approval for a scheme that is not satisfactory, based on the evidence so far.	This document will be an appendix to the report. Most of the concerns raised in individual staff sessions have been covered here. It should be noted that favourable comments that have been received have not been recorded in the same way. The report to Resources Committee will specifically refer to all staff comments being included on the staff and Members intranet.
34	With regard the cashiers, there were a number of health and safety concerns regarding security. A recent audit had highlighted the need for a sealed cash office, having bulletproof glass, reinforced counter and beneath the floor safe and bars on windows.	I have asked Simon Martin for a copy of the audit report. Open plan cash office arrangements are in place at other local authorities.
35	How in depth would CRM system be, eg how much would a CRM operative actually be able to tell an enquirer about Council Tax.	It was mentioned in staff presentations that further discussion would take place with EM's, line managers and staff over the proportion of enquiries dealt with at the first point of contact. CRM scripts will be developed to deal with routine, less complex enquiries.
36	Who would be ultimately responsible for the cash at the end of the day.	As now, each customer advisor would be responsible for their own cash takings. Supervisory functions would be in place as appropriate.
37	As a result of various Best Value Reviews and surveys it had been found that Revenues, Benefits, general reception and Planning had been found to be either good or excellent in respect of personal callers and telephone answering so why is there a need for change. If a service is excellent, it cannot get better, but there is plenty of scope for it to get a lot worse.	The service provided to customers is varied. Concern has been raised about the size of sample used to inform the review. The mystery shopping exercise carried out during the revenues best value review was even smaller than that for the access to services review. We are committed to improving services, whether they are poor, good or excellent. Looking at this from a customer perspective, they would much rather deal with one person over a number of queries rather than being passed to different people.

38	<p>Officers from Housing Services recently attended a couple of meetings where the Audit Commission outlined revisions to their methodology for inspecting housing services delivered by local authorities. Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) are one element of their revised methodology, which were introduced in autumn 2004. KLOEs represent sets of questions and statements for assessing and measuring the effectiveness and efficiency of housing services. Officers were informed that Audit Inspectors will be focusing at KLOEs which deliver efficiency savings in social housing (Gershon Report) and will inspecting a range of services. Inspectors have indicated that they would expect to see in an 'excellent' authority a dedicated call centre just for housing repairs - which we have, but how does this fit in with the Council's access to services? (nb Housing is currently rated a 2* service).</p>	<p>Following a check of the KLOEs it has been confirmed by a member of staff from housing that there is no reference to the need for a dedicated contact centre to be located in housing.</p>
39	<p>If the housing repairs call centre was to be integrated with a general call centre how will the costings for the call centre be calculated – bearing in mind the Government's requirements for the HRA to be ring fenced? Any changes will have to show efficiency savings to the HRA.</p>	<p>It is true that Housing Revenue Account activity (the housing services) can not be used to help pay for General Fund services. Accordingly the cost of any housing service involvement will have to be charged, after being costed, to the HRA. Any savings relating to efficiency can therefore be calculated in same way as any other service.</p>
40	<p>Advantages of having the repairs call centre sited within the housing department is that there is a continual flow of information concerning tenants /properties/situations between housing officers/repairs maintenance staff etc. Staffs awareness of other relevant issues would be lost if they were located separately. In the majority of cases a person's queries can be answered with one call. There is a concern that removing the repairs call centre from the department will limit the knowledge that staff gain from working together as a whole, and therefore limit the current superior and caring service now provided.</p>	<p>Currently the repairs 'call centre' achieves very high customer satisfaction rating. Consideration will need to be given to the benefits or otherwise of including this service in a general customer centre.</p>
41	<p>Customer satisfaction levels for the housing repairs service is currently exceptionally high – in the upper quartile.</p>	<p>This is not in question and any changes will need to show an even higher level is possible.</p>
42	<p>Has any data been collected for projected future usage of this facility?</p>	<p>It is obviously difficult to estimate future usage, especially as we are looking to broaden the number of access channels available. However, other similar sized authorities have already done this and have the data to hand. This has, and will continue to be used.</p>

43	It had been reported at a JMT meeting, during an introduction to the Access to Services proposals, that staff had been consulted with regard to call centre requirements. This appeared to not be the case as the Housing Department had not been asked for their requirements.	Staff have been consulted and will continue to be consulted as proposals develop.
44	It was considered that a call centre could not answer the many technical enquiries which the Housing Department currently receive. This would mean that the public would ultimately have to be put through to that department in any case.	It is accepted that many enquiries are complex and technical. Accordingly should this service be included in a future customer centre it could only succeed if full training is given to new operatives which will need updating on a regular basis.

Committee: Resources
Date: 31 March 2005
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Audit Commission: User Focus Inspection
Author: Tracy Turner (01799 510402)

Summary

- 1 This report advises Members of the outcome of the Audit Commission's User Focus inspection in November 2004, and reports on an action plan provided to the Commission which details measures to be taken to address issues raised in the report. It is recommended that the Committee note the report and action plan, and receives future reports, as necessary, to secure resources to carry out the action plan.

Background

- 2 The Audit Commission visited the authority in November 2004 to carry out work on user focus arising from the CPA report which had highlighted a number of strengths and weaknesses in this area.
- 3 The Commission facilitated a number of workshops with staff and Members, and consulted external partners. A self-assessment was also completed by the Executive Management Team against the five key audit questions.
- 4 The inspection was intended to assist the council with self-awareness of its approach to user focus and highlight areas for development. A report and framework action plan (for the council to complete comments on) has now been sent to the council by the Commission (attached as Appendix A and B).

Report Conclusions

- 5 The report recognises that there are areas of good practice within the council and of evidence of services being improved as a result of user feedback. However, the report also points to weaknesses in communication, consultation, and the coordination of user focussed activity. There was also a need to improve equalities and diversity in relation to Black and Minority Ethnic groups, and to establish a research led evidence base from which continuous improvement and monitoring activities could spring. Corporate capacity to address the council's ambitious plans in the corporate plan was also questioned.

Action Plan

- 6 The council was required to submit comments on the framework action plan to the Audit Commission (also attached), which will be discussed with the council through the Relationship Manager.
- 7 As a principle the council has undertaken to address user focus recommendations through the CPA Improvement Plan as it was considered that producing yet another programme of work would dilute the focus which had gone into rationalising plans and programmes under that plan and the Corporate Plan.
- 8 The Executive Manager – Strategy & Performance will draw up detailed project plans for each recommendation in association with the relevant officers to achieve all tasks within the required timescale.
- 9 It is proposed that monitoring of the User Focus action plan will be undertaken by the Resources Committee on a quarterly basis.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee note the User Focus inspection report and associated action plan. The Committee are also asked to note that reports will be brought to future meetings as required in order to secure resources to carry out the required actions.

User Focus

Uttlesford District Council

ACTION PLAN

Reference:	User Focus Uttlesford v0.2
Date:	March 2005

Page	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
Title						
5	R1 – Review the draft corporate plan and service plans assessing the user focus and consultation implications and produce a prioritised consultation and user focus programme for the next 18 months which the council has the capacity to deliver.	3	EPM/ EM - SP		The corporate plan has been revised, updated and re-issued, and the user focus implications mapped against key areas for improvement. User focus improvement actions will be addressed as part of the CPA Improvement Plan All key documents – including the Corporate Plan and CPA Improvement Plan – will be reviewed, assessed and updated annually.	Corporate Plan review – complete CPA Improvement Plan by 2006
5	R2- Ensure the research and findings of the Access to Services, Young People’s, Older People’s and Communications Best Value Reviews inform each other effectively.	2	EM - SP		The Communications Best Value Review will make recommendations on internal communication and the effective use of resources such as the intranet, GIS and website	By March 2006
5	R3 - Ensure that hard to reach groups are effectively consulted and involved in the development of the council’s policies and service delivery	3	EM - SP		The authority will be drawing up communications and consultation strategies and is actively assessing ways in which hard to reach groups can be effectively mapped	By Dec 2006

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Page	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
	R4 - Improve the use of demographic, consultation and other data in the development of policies and services for example by making GIS information and consultation results easily available on the intranet	2	EM - SP		The Communications Best Value Review will make recommendations on internal communication and the effective use of resources such as the intranet, GIS and website	By Dec 2006
6	R5 - Develop an effective corporate framework to progress user focus issues in the council translated into clear guidelines for services for example on Communications	3	EM - SP		The Communications Best Value Review will drive the revision of a communications and consultation strategy. A performance management framework will be developed during 2005/06	By Dec 2006
6	R6 - Raise the profile of equalities and diversity issues within the council particularly in terms of progressing the Race Equality Scheme	3	EM - HR		A corporate working group will be established to carry out an audit and develop an action plan to meet the Equality Standard. The authority is also working with the Race Equality Council through the Essex Chief Executives' Group	By Dec 2006
6	R7 - Evaluate the effectiveness of user involvement, consultation and publicity and share learning and feedback from this across the council	2	EM - SP		The Communications Best Value Review and the development of internal communications and resources are expected to lead to an increase in capacity allowing greater analysis of effectiveness	By Dec 2006
6	R8 - Improve internal communications for example make better use of the Intranet and improve staff newsletter	3	EM - SP		Improvements to the corporate staff newsletter are to be piloted in March 2005. Changes will be made to the intranet during 2005-06 to increase the amount of popular information and news and thereby increase its user focus	By Mar 2006

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Page	Recommendation	Priority 1 = Low 2 = Med 3 = High	Responsibility	Agreed	Comments	Date
8	R9 - Ensure consultation and user focus work is effectively co-ordinated with appropriate feedback to respondents and the public	3	EM - SP		The Communications Best Value Review and the development of internal communications and resources are expected to lead to an increase in capacity allowing corporate coordination	By Mar 2006
8	R10 - Ensure leaflets and other publications are well designed and carry consistent user focus content which can be delivered for example publicising large print	2	EM - SP		A publications audit will be undertaken as part of the Communications Best Value Review. A range of issues including corporate branding of material, and accessibility (including large print) will be taken forward from the Access to Services Best Value Review Service Improvement Plan	By Mar 2006
8	R11 - Establish key user focus priorities and intended outcomes	3	EM - CS		A Customer Service Strategy has been developed and will be implemented in 2005	By Mar 2006
8	R12 - Establish baseline positions for public and user expectations and views and monitor changes	2	EM - SP		A performance management framework will be developed during 2005/06 to include baseline data and establish the concept of continuous improvement	By Mar 2006
8	R13 - Research and seek out good practice from other councils and other sectors on user focus.	2	EM - SP		Support for benchmarking and the dissemination of best practice will be provided by the increased capacity of the Strategy and Performance Section	By Mar 2006

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Committee **Resources Committee**

Date **31 March 2005**

Agenda Item No: **8**

Title: **Annual Efficiency Statements**

Author: **Philip O'Dell (01799) 510670**

Summary

- 1 This report provides a brief overview of the purpose and requirements of Annual Efficiency Statements, required under what has become known as 'Gershon' after the leader of the recent review of public sector efficiency.

Background

- 2 The Gershon review identified possible efficiency gains of over £20billion across the public sector by 2007/08. These figures are built into the assumptions underpinning the Chancellor of the Exchequer's recent Budget announcements. The target for local government is around £6.5billion by 2007/08.
- 3 Detailed guidance has been received and more is awaited, but the main points are:
 - a) Each council is expected to make 2.5% of efficiency savings per annum on a cumulative basis over the next three years. Cuts in levels of service, performance and quality will not count towards this target, nor will increased income for the same level of service. Councils can still decide, as locally democratic bodies whether to cut service quality or levels, and whether to increase income for an unchanged service, but such choices will not count towards the efficiencies being targeted under this regime.
 - b) At least half of the efficiency savings should be 'cashable', releasing funds to invest in frontline services or to keep the Council Tax or housing rent levels down. The remainder can be 'non-cashable'. These are quantified changes that get more work from the same resources, such as reductions in staff sickness levels or greater speed of dealing with transactions, perhaps by use of information technology. These non-cashable items will require lateral thinking in terms of identification, but very often build on initiatives that councils are already taking to improve efficiency.
 - c) The majority of the efficiencies are expected to be achieved via improved procurement, rationalisation of corporate (support) services, improved use of information technology and partnership working, although there are many other ways to meet the requirements.

Detailed requirements

- 4 Councils will need to produce Annual Efficiency Statements, submitted on-line to the government and 'signed' by the leader of the council, the chief executive and the chief financial officer.
- 5 There will be a forward-looking statement, identifying what councils think they can achieve against their 2.5% annual target. The figures will be broken down over individual services and will include details of how efficiencies are to be achieved, as well as a commentary on the overall approach to efficiency. For 2005/06 this has to be done by 15th April 2005, with Uttlesford's first target set at £264,000.
- 6 There will be a backward-looking part to the requirement each year, identifying and reviewing actual efficiencies. The first of these will relate to 2004/05 and is due by 15 June 2005.
- 7 For district councils, there is voluntary half-year disclosure to the government on progress in achieving the efficiency target.
- 8 There will need to be clear audit trails and the process and figures will be reviewed by external audit.
- 9 It is expected that the Annual Efficiency Statement for the year ahead will be included in Best Value Performance Plans still due for publication by 30th June.
- 10 Scope exists for other local publication of targets and achievements for increased efficiency.
- 11 Further guidance is awaited from government, mainly surrounding a mechanism to check that quality has not fallen during the implementation of efficiencies

Meeting the immediate deadlines and targets

- 12 Officers are confident that analysis of the last two budget processes and particularly some of the savings made in them will result in the cashable efficiencies target being met. An Executive Management Team meeting will shortly focus on the non-cashable aspect, with the expectation again being that the immediate requirement can be met.

Longer term requirements and a wider corporate approach

- 13 The Council needs to develop a longer-term strategy to meet the increasing requirements of the Annual Efficiency Statements. This will require engaging staff at all levels in the approach, building it into our service and financial planning, developing simple yet effective ways to capture and record valid efficiencies, and addressing the real opportunities and difficulties of alternative methods of service delivery and organisational functioning. There are also

clear links to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment and Best Value processes, which will use the Annual Efficiency Statements as key evidence.

- 14 It could well be that an officer working group is set up to give initial energy to the process, although longer term the key will be wide involvement around the Council.

RECOMMENDED that the Resources Committee notes the content of this report and submits it to Full Council to notify all Members of the key elements of this key corporate requirement.

Background Papers: Guidance from ODPM

Committee: RESOURCES
Date: 31 March 2005
Agenda Item No: 9
Title: Air Quality Monitoring Equipment
Author: Will Cockerell (01799) 510581

Summary

- 1 Members are asked to consider increasing the capital programme for the coming year by £13 000 to enable the purchase of air quality monitoring equipment.

Background

- 2 The capital programme for 2005/06 includes £21,000 for purchasing an air quality analyser to measure hydrocarbons which will be installed in the existing mobile air quality monitoring station. The intention is that this equipment would be positioned at suitable locations that have experienced aircraft related pollution incidents and at sites which are subjected to heavy road traffic. The suppliers of the analyser have recently introduced an option to measure a specific pollutant 1,2,4 –Trimethylbenzene which is said to be associated with aircraft engine emissions, and would enable a differentiation to be made between road traffic and aircraft sources.
- 3 The additional cost associated with this option is £13 000 and Members are asked to consider increasing the capital programme to enable this enhanced level of monitoring to take place.

RECOMMENDED that the capital programme be increased by £13 000.

Background Papers: None

Committee: Resources
Date: 31 March 2005
Agenda Item No: 10
Title: CCTV – Feasibility study - update
Author: Rachel Hutchinson (01799) 510585

Summary

- 1 This report provides Members with details of the formal request from Great Dunmow Town Council to have its CCTV System upgraded. It recommends that the Resources Committee agree to increase the existing capital budget of £9,522 to £14,522 in order to facilitate the upgrade.

Background

- 2 The Quality Of Life Plan established that there was a need to undertake an evaluation of all of the public sector CCTV services in Uttlesford. To this end, a Task Group was established which recommended to the Community and Leisure Committee that a basic upgrade should be undertaken in the spring of 2005. Partners agreed to contribute towards the costs of the upgrade and a capital sum was agreed by the Resources Committee on 27 January 2005.
- 3 At the time of writing the report, Great Dunmow Town Council had indicated that it did not wish to participate in the upgrading, ergo, no request was made for a capital contribution to upgrade its system.
- 4 However, following a meeting of the Great Dunmow Town Council, its Members have recinded their original decision and have made a formal request to the Council to upgrade its CCTV System in line partners. In addition, it has agreed to contribute towards the costs (in conjunction with the Dunmow Chamber of Trade and Commerce). In order to supply, install and commission the upgrade, an additional capital sum of £5,000 is required.

RECOMMENDED that the CCTV System In Great Dunmow be upgraded and that an additional capital sum of £5,000 be included in the budget provision for 2005/06.

Background Papers: Uttlesford Community Safety Audit 2004, Notes from CCTV meeting October 2003 –2004, Annual CCTV report 2004, General Residents Survey 2004 – Priority Research Ltd, Formal Request from Great Dunmow Town Council.

Committee: Resources
Date: 31 March 2005
Agenda Item No: 11
Title: Appointment of Council Representative to Saffron Walden Initiative Partnership Board
Author: Mrs Sarah McLagan (01799) 510560

Summary

- 1 This report advises Members of the need to appoint a Council representative to sit on the Saffron Walden Initiative Partnership Board. It recommends that Councillor Savage be confirmed as the representative.

Background

- 2 At the meeting of the Resources Committee in September it was agreed that the Council would support the appointment of the Saffron Walden Project Officer through a contribution to the salary for the post and by accommodating the officer in the Saffron Walden council offices. The Project Officer is responsible for implementing the Action Plan that emerged following the Healthcheck exercise that was carried out in 2004.
- 3 The Project Officer is now in post and is beginning to develop plans for implementing the Action Plan. As part of the funding arrangements laid down by the main supporting body – the Countryside Agency – there is a requirement for a Memorandum of Agreement between the relevant parties and for a Partnership Board to be established consisting of the representative parties.

Partnership Board Representatives

- 4 The representative parties on the Partnership Board are –
 - 2 representatives of UDC – one officer and one Member
 - 2 representatives of Saffron Walden Town Council
 - 2 representatives of ECC – one officer and one Member
 - 4 representatives of Saffron Walden Initiative.

In addition, the Countryside Agency can attend at meetings and must agree the activities of the Project Officer.

- 5 As the immediate line Manager of the Project Officer, the Executive Programme Manager will attend at Board meetings as the officer representative for the Council. With regard to Member representation, Members will recall that when this matter was discussed in September, Councillor Savage expressed an interest in the role. The Executive Programme Manager contacted Councillor Savage who agreed to attend the

first meeting of the Partnership Board and to continue in this role, subject to confirmation of the Resources Committee at this meeting.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee confirm the appointment of Councillor Savage as Council representative on the Saffron Walden Partnership Board.

Background Papers: Memorandum of Agreement
Minutes of inaugural Partnership Board Meeting
(24/03/05)

Committee: RESOURCES
Date: 31 MARCH 2005
Agenda Item No: 12
Title: INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL
Author: Mick Purkiss (01799) 510430

Summary

- 1 This report recommends that members reappoint the current Independent Remuneration Panel for a further period of two years.

Background

- 2 The Independent Remuneration Panel was set up in October 2001 following statutory guidance at that time that any decision to amend a scheme of allowances must be taken having regard to the recommendation of such a Panel.
- 3 Uttlesford's Panel is made up of three people who were appointed following an advertising campaign and interviews with the Chief Executive and other senior officers.
- 4 It was originally intended that the initial individual appointments of the Panel Members would be for 2, 3 or 4 years respectively thus ensuring continuity. It was also intended that subsequent appointments would be for 4 years. This was to ensure that the Panel Members did not become too familiar with Councillors. However, this has not proved to be the case and there are obvious advantages in the Panel being fully aware of the way the Council and its Members operate.

- 5 The appointments have not been reviewed and this should now be addressed. It is suggested that the appointments of the current Members be renewed for a further period of 2 years until 2007 and from that time, one Member be replaced each year with the new members being appointed for periods of 4 years.

RECOMMENDED that the Panel be reappointed as set out in paragraph 5 of the report.

Background Papers: Nil.

Committee: COUNCIL
Date: 10 February 2004
Agenda Item No: 13
Title: COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2005/06
Author: MAGGIE COX (01799) 510369

Summary

- 1 Attached is the draft Committee timetable 2005/06. The meeting dates are broadly similar to last year.
- 2 It should be noted that the Constitution Task Group is likely to complete its work later in the year and any implications for the timetable will be reported to members.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee Timetable 2005/06 be approved.

Background Papers: none

COMMITTEE TIMETABLE 2005/06

	Day	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
Community and Leisure	Tues		7			6	25			10		7		
Health and Housing	Thur		9			8	27			12 26		9		
Environment	Tue		14			13		1		17		14		
Licensing	Wed		15			14		2		18		15		
Transport & Highways *Held at Great Dunmow	Thur		16			8		3		19		16		
Scrutiny 1	Wed		22			21		8		25		22		
Resources	Thur		23	28		22		17			2 9	23		
Scrutiny 2	Wed			6			5	30			8		5	
Council	Tues	17 annual		19			18		13		16 Thurs		25	16 annual
Development Control 2pm	Wed	18	8 29	20	¹⁰ 31	21	12	2 23	14	11	1 22	15	5 26	17
Standards Cttee* 4pm	Mon	16		18		12		14		16		20		
Stansted Airport AP	Mon	9			1		31				1			8
Workshops	Mon		27	11		26	10	21	5	23	20	27	10	

I