

Committee: Scrutiny 2
Date: 4 February 2004
Agenda Item: 4
Title: Work Programme – Sponsorship
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510 402

Summary

- 1 As part of the Work Programme for Scrutiny 2 Committee Members asked for information on the existing policy and practice within the authority on Sponsorship. This report contains details of Good Practice in sponsorship that can be considered by Senior Management Team.

Background

- 2 Sponsorship is a funding opportunity that is worth hundreds of millions of pounds per year and Uttlesford like many other local authorities has used sponsorship to enhance service delivery. The Cabinet Office as has defined sponsorship:

“ The payment of a fee or payment in kind by a company in return for the rights to public association with an activity, item, person or property for mutual commercial benefit “

- 3 The Council does not have a formal policy on Sponsorship but attached at Appendix A is a Good Practice Guide for Sponsorship within Uttlesford District Council. The Guide is a practical approach to assist managers who wish to attract sponsorship. The Guide is very much a common sense approach to sponsorship. It does not list what you can and cannot do and assumes managers know that companies associated with tobacco or alcohol for example are sensitive areas. The Guide recommends that Planning Services be excluded from sponsorship.
- 4 Members may wish to comment on the Good Practice to Sponsorship.

RECOMMENDED

- 5 The comments of Committee are sought on the Good Practice Guide to Sponsorship.
- 6 Note that the Planning Services will be excluded from sponsorship.

Background Paper: Cabinet Office Guidance to Departments on Sponsorship of Government Activities

Sponsorship within Uttlesford District Council

A Good Practice Guide

INTRODUCTION

Sponsorship is a major national industry with an annual turnover in the region of £640 million (Intel Report 1998).

Companies get involved in sponsorship for a variety of reasons, but essentially for sound business principles. As with any business relationship, sponsorship requires that the sponsoring company receives a benefit that is relevant to its own business and communication aims.

To clarify what this good practice guide is talking about the definition of sponsorship being used is as follows:

“The payment of a fee or payment in kind by a company in return for the rights to public association with an activity, item, person or property for mutual commercial benefit”

(Cabinet Office – Guidance to Departments on Sponsorship of Government Activities, 1)

Sponsorship should not be confused with partnership working which is where two or more organisations are working together to achieve mutual aims and objectives. This is a regular feature within local authority working where partners jointly fund activities where there is a common aim and purpose.

The key element of sponsorship is that a sponsor has rights. These rights can be as simple as included within the definition of being associated with an activity, item, person or property, or they can be more rigorously defined within a legally binding agreement. It is often the case that activities that are sponsored have to conform to the wishes of the sponsor in order that they can maximise their commercial benefit from the association. This can reduce control over events and activities and can lead to areas of conflict between lead organisation and their sponsor.

Any department considering entering into a sponsorship agreement should be aware of the consequences and have considered all of the issues that could arise from the arrangement. This documents sets out a

number of parameters that should be considered, principles that need to be adhered to in order that sponsorship opportunities are relevant to the Councils overall business and ethics.

PARAMETERS FOR SPONSORSHIP

There should always be set parameters for sponsor involvement in public sector work to ensure that it meets and does not conflict with the work of the whole of the authority. Three 'Good Practice' parameters are as follows:

1. Companies' support should be seen as adding significant benefit to an existing Council message or campaign
2. There should be no overt commercial advantage to the sponsor in terms of the direct sales of products or brands as a result of their association with the Council.
3. The project should not entirely be dependant on sponsorship for its funding.

THE COUNCILS APPROACH

Within this the Council should always look at sponsorship activities and rigorously examine the following:

1. Should particular activities be excluded from sponsorship due to their statutory or regulatory nature i.e. Planning Services.
2. Particular companies should be considered unsuitable as sponsors on the grounds of potential areas of conflict in interest or appropriateness. This could include the checking of companies financial viability, appropriate business practices, polices customer and media profiles.)
3. The Council should not seek sponsors where firms are involved in significant negotiations with the Council's departments (whether or not these negotiations are linked to the event or activity needing sponsorship), or from firms whose business may be affected by the Councils' own role in making or enforcing legislation.

PRINCIPLES OF SPONSORSHIP

In establishing sponsorship of Council services or events the following principles should be considered.

1. Sponsorship support should only be considered where it would be likely to produce significant net benefit for the Council at no detriment to the public interest
2. Sponsorship support should add to, not replace, core funding
3. Sponsorship should be sought in an open and even-handed manner from businesses competing in a particular field. A chosen sponsor's competitors should not be given grounds to complain that they were not given a fair chance

In general, acceptance of sponsorship should be tested against the general principle that it does not, and does not appear to, place the Council under any obligation to any sponsor that goes beyond any

4. agreements relating to the event or activity. Particular care should be taken when considering large amounts or repeat sponsorship of events.
5. Sponsorship should not dilute the Council's campaign or message
6. The Council must not, and must not appear to, endorse the sponsoring company or its products
7. Sponsors should not use a Council's communications campaign or event as a direct sales channel for their products or services
8. Sponsors should not have any input into, or expect to influence the messages or activities of the Council towards the sponsor's business area

SUMMARY

Sponsorship can add value to the Council's service or activities if carefully arranged and properly agreed, to summarise sponsorship within the public sector:

1. Be appropriate to the activity or event
2. Not be in conflict with the Council's specific aims and objectives
3. Be accountable and open
4. Add to the efficiency of the event/activity/campaign
5. Not give a direct sales channel for the sponsor
6. Add to the message of the Council's services not detract from it
7. Add to the efficiency of the event/activity/campaign

8. Not give a direct sales channel for the sponsor
9. Add to the message of the Councils services not detract from it

Background Papers

Cabinet Office – Guidance to Departments on Sponsorship of Government Activities

Committee: Scrutiny 2
Date: 4 February 2004
Agenda Item No: 5
Title: IT Services
Author: John Mercer (01799) 510421

Summary

- 1 This report provides the Committee with a summary of the work of the Council's Information Technology (IT) Service.

Background

- 2 The IT Section was originally set up in 1993 and has overall responsibility for the delivery of IT services within the Council. The main elements of the IT service are:
 - (a) Day-to-day user support, including help desk services. Support is provided to all 350 office-based staff and 44 elected Members (see paragraph 7 below) including users with special needs (see paragraph 8). The IT Section is responsible for the maintenance and rolling-replacement of around 300 PCs and laptops, 130 printers, scanners, projectors and other devices. The IT Section receives around 4,000 help desk calls per annum.
 - (b) Application installations, support and development – there are a number of large applications, running most of the Council's main services and a number of other applications, for more specialist purposes. A list is attached as Appendix One. The IT Section supports all these applications, apart from the Revenues suite, which is managed by Fox IT Ltd, under an outsourcing agreement. New applications are being installed each year, for example, legal case management and Planning document imaging systems have been installed in recent months. In addition, the IT Section are constantly developing bespoke systems to meet the requirements of services, as well as managing the necessary upgrades to the large existing systems.
 - (c) Management of contracts with external companies – at any one time, there are about 50 companies supplying goods and services to the IT Section.
 - (d) Technical support - The IT Section maintain the technical infrastructure, which includes an extensive 'category 5' network, 40 network switches and

various wide-area network connections using ADSL & kilostream technology. These provide links to other council establishments, such as the Museum, Tourist Information Centre and the Community Information Centres. In total, there are 51 windows-based servers, mostly located in the computer room at Saffron Walden. These servers use either Microsoft Windows NT4 or Windows 2000 as network operating systems. A major upgrade to Windows 2000 is currently taking place. Most applications are published to users using Citrix 'thin client' technology. Using thin client technology reduces IT support requirements as applications are loaded only on the Citrix servers and not locally on each user's PC. Citrix is particularly useful for delivering complex applications to locations with limited bandwidth, for example, staff working away from the office.

- (e) Technical Development - There is a need for constant updating & developing to keep pace with the increase in volume and complexity of IT in the Council. For example, a new centralised back-up system has been installed within the last few weeks. A new technical strategy will be developed for 2004 to 2009 and is likely to include the replacement and upgrading of existing technologies as well as emerging technologies such as Voice Over IP, wireless technology, storage area networking and digital TV.
- (f) IT security - The growth in malicious computer-related activity has necessitated the installation of additional security systems. Two sets of clustered firewalls, which protect the internal network from intruders, have been installed, along with two anti-virus systems (from different suppliers), mailguard (software which filters out undesirable emails and monitors email usage) and websense (which restricts access to authorised websites only). The IT Section also employs a specialist company to carry out 'vulnerability testing' to ascertain whether all the security systems are functioning correctly.
- (g) Information management – The IT Section manages the corporate website & Intranet as well as a number of corporate information systems, including the Geographic Information System (GIS) & the Local Land and Property Gazetteer.
- (h) Implementing e-Government – see paragraph 3 below.

The E-Government Programme

- 3 The Government has set a target that, by 2005, 100% of all council services should be capable of being delivered electronically. It is encouraging councils to make full use of the potential for electronic service delivery to improve the responsiveness and quality of services. It acknowledges that new technology should not replace personal contact, but it should make it better supported. To help meet these aims, a total of £400,000 of funding has been made available to each council for the years 2002/03 and 2003/04. In each year an IEG (Implementing Electronic Government) statement had to be produced before the funding would be released. The most recent IEG statement, submitted in November 2003, has been approved by the Office of the Deputy

Prime Minister (ODPM) and as consequence the Council will once again receive additional funding. However, an announcement is still to be made advising of the amount to be received. Indications are that it will again be £200,000 and this figure has been used for the purpose of preparing the draft 2004/05 IT Programme.

- 4 E-Government is not a single project, rather a programme of interconnected projects contributing to the 2005 target and the wider e-Government objectives. These projects can be divided into three groups:
- (a) National projects – There are a range of central Government initiatives requiring local input. These include for example, the National Land and Property Gazetteer (NLPG) the National Planning Portal and the National Land Information Service (NLIS). Further details of the national projects can be found on the IDEA website (www.IDEA.Gov.UK). It should be noted that local progress on these key national projects is essential if on-going funding from central government is to be secured.
 - (b) Local projects – These reflect local priorities and provide evidence of progress towards the 2005 target. Recent achievements include:
 - a. The re-launch of the Council’s website. The site has been re-built using Microsoft Content Management Software and Cold Fusion technology. It includes:
 - i. Online access to the planning applications & related documentation.
 - ii. Various online Environmental Services transactions, such as abandoned vehicle reporting.
 - iii. A life long learning website.
 - iv. Enhanced tourism and museum information.
 - v. Online credit & debit card payment facilities.
 - b. Document imaging ‘live’ in the Planning Department.
 - c. NLPG accreditation achieved by the IDeA deadline.
 - d. Membership of the national planning portal.
 - (c) County and regional partnership projects. The Council is a member of the Essex Online Partnership (EOLP). The partnership is undertaking a series of countywide projects, which require input from constituent councils. These projects include Essex Marketplace, e-forms, Essex Extranet and Essex Portal. Further information on these projects can be provided. In addition, Uttlesford is leading a study on the registration and authentication of online transactions for the EOLP.
- 5 The Uttlesford E-Government Task Group was set up following a best value review of central services in 2001. Its role is to advise the Resources Committee regarding the development of e-Government strategy, identify resource and funding opportunities and recommend the priorities for spending IEG funding.
- 6 The 100% target is nationally monitored through Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) 157. It is envisaged that by the 31 March 2004 Uttlesford will

have 60% of its services available electronically, compared to an anticipated national average of 66%. It is still envisaged that the Council will meet the 31 December 2005 deadline, provided current funding levels are maintained. It should be emphasised however, that the 2005 deadline is just the start of an on-going process of improving the electronic delivery of local government services. An Uttlesford E- Government Strategy, covering the next five years, is currently in preparation and an initial draft has been submitted to the Task Group. An updated version, incorporating the Corporate Plan targets, will be produced shortly.

Members' IT services

- 7 Elected members have been provided with IT facilities since 2000. Uttlesford was one of the first councils to provide such facilities and was short-listed for a national innovations award for its work in this area. The initiative was largely successful, with some 35 of the 42 members of the last council being regular users. Last year the system was upgraded to coincide with the May 2003 elections. The current system allows access from anywhere on the Internet using a secure connection from the Council's website. VPN (virtual private network) facilities have also been installed on the laptops. These enable Members to work offline should they so wish. On-going improvements in respect of system performance and reliability are currently in progress.

Special needs computing

- 8 Over recent years, the IT Section have invested significant resources in providing access to the Council's IT systems to users with special needs. However, the IT Section is aware that it has limitations in terms of skills and resources in this area and have therefore employed consultants to provide specialist staff training and specialist support for a Member with a visual impairment. The IT Section have also developed the website to level AA of W3C Web Accessibility Initiative standards on web accessibility.

Strengths and weaknesses

- 9 **Strengths** - The key strengths of the existing service are:
- (a) On-going investment in recent years has resulted in one of the best infrastructures in the country, for a district council of this size. For example, only a relatively small percentage of councils have installed 'thin-client' technology. Also, users have access to modern PCs, Microsoft products, printers and other IT equipment.
 - (b) All the large corporate applications have been modernised over recent years, apart from the Financial Information System which is currently being replaced. The system was purchased following a joint tender exercise with Stevenage Borough Council.

- (c) The IT Section is often innovative. For example:
- a. It is one of the first councils to provide online access to planning documents.
 - b. It is the only council currently working with the ODPM & E-Envoy to develop registration and authentication systems for local authority online transactions.
 - c. It is using partnership working to attract additional funding and share expertise. For example, a funding bid has been submitted in partnership with the office of the national Citizens Advice Bureau, in order to develop practical joined-up working.
- (d) The IT Section has a strong track record of implementing new systems on time and within budget.
- (e) Staff are generally satisfied with the service provided by the IT Section. A recent user satisfaction survey resulted in an overall score of 3.73 (out of 5) compared to a national upper-quartile score of 3.56. In addition, around 80% of help desk calls are resolved within published target times.
- (f) There are on-going IT training programmes for both IT staff and users.

- 10 **Weaknesses** - The most significant problem faced by the IT Section is that staff and financial resources have been stretched by the ever-increasing workload. Since 1997/98, there has been a 300% growth in the use of ICT within the Council, a 76% growth in the number of networked PCs and a 30% increase in the user base. This has been achieved against a background of no overall increase in the number of permanent ICT staff, and a 25% reduction in ICT costs. This has meant that IT skills are thinly stretched, there is increasing reliance on temporary staffing to fulfil programmes and difficulties are experienced keeping revenue spend within budgets. Consequently, the IT Section does not always fulfil the demands and expectations of the users.

Future developments

- 11 Information technology is an ever-evolving service where new demands are constantly being made on the Section. To illustrate, the draft 2004/05 IT Service Plan contains 67 development targets, the main items of which are listed in the attached Appendix 2. The biggest challenge over the next two years will be meeting the Government target of having all services available electronically by 31 December 2005. Also considerable work will be required to ensure that the Council realises the potential benefits of e-government, in terms of improved efficiency, quicker responses etc. In addition, e-services only reach a very small percentage of the local population. Over the next two years this needs to be increased by:
- (a) Improved marketing of electronic services.
 - (b) Improved consultation with would-be users of electronic services.

(c) Use of a wider range of access channels, including development of First Point of Contact hubs (CICs, kiosks etc) and the use of text messaging & similar technologies.

(d) Improved use of intermediaries, such as Citizen Advice Bureaux.

(e) Ensuring that broadband is available in all parts of the district.

12 It is estimated that the e-government programme will cost in the region of £800,000 for 2004/05 and 2005/06. Of this, it is anticipated that at least £400,000 will be funded through the IEG process & the remainder either through the capital programme or successful bids for additional funding.

RECOMMENDED that the Committee note the report.

Background Papers: Draft E-Government Strategy, IEG1, 2 & 3 Statements

Appendix One - Main Corporate Applications

SX3 First Housing Integrated System – Housing Management, allocations, response maintenance, planned maintenance, right to buy and rent collection.

Ocella – Planning (Development Control), Building Control, Environmental Health, Environmental Services (refuse collection, pest control, licensing etc) and taxi licensing.

SX3 First Revenues Systems – Council Tax, Business Rates & Housing Benefits.

GGP GIS (geographic information) System – Used in Planning, Property Services, Building Control, Emergency Planning, Environmental Services etc.

Anite ICLipse Document Imaging System – Used in Housing Benefits, Council Tax, Business Rates, Central Filing and Planning.

Radius Powersolve System – Accounting, debtor collection & creditor payment. This is currently being replaced by a system supplied by Torrex PLC.

Strand – Elections Management and Electoral Role.

Microsoft Office 2000 – Word, Access, Outlook & Excel.

Radius Cash Receipting System – Includes Internet and Intranet payment modules.

ICL FIMS System – Housing Benefit Anti-Fraud System.

Vizual Personnel Director – Personnel administration system.

Enline CMIS – Committee Management System

Iken - Legal Case Management System

Microsoft Content Management Server – Website development system.

Achieve Forms – Online e-forms developer

In addition, there are:

- Smaller packaged applications, for example, Border Inspection Post system, Oracle Portal, websense, mailguard, anti-virus, firewall packages etc.
- In-house written applications, for example, car park fine & permit management system, room booking, stationery ordering, Arts and Sports Bookings & mutual exchange systems etc, and
- Specialist software, for example, CAD package, Quark desk top publishing system in use within the Council.

Appendix Two - IT Section Work Plan 2004/05 (extracts)

1. Develop a new help desk system
2. Agree a new SLA with IT service users
3. Develop a programme of IT Induction Training and skills assessment
4. Introduce IT skills assessment into the IT induction training process
5. Upgrade of network operating system from Windows NT4 to Windows 2000
6. Upgrade Citrix from Metaframe to XP
7. Migrate MS Exchange from 5.5 to 2003
8. Installation of an Intruder Detection system
9. Develop a formal Network Strategy
10. Update the Disaster Recovery Plan
11. Implement home working pilot in Planning
12. Extend home working to Revenues
13. Establish Extranet connection for audit partnership
14. Migration of financial management systems
15. Upgrade Housing application to iWorld version
16. Installation of a corporate CRM system
17. Installation of a corporate DIP system
18. Installation of workflow into Revenues Section (subject to a successful funding bid)
19. Provision of First Point of Contact facilities to Citizen Advice Bureaux (subject to a successful funding bid)
20. Further Oracle Portal development, including alcohol licencing
21. Update select supplier lists & integrate with Essex Marketplace & Torrex E-Procurement system
22. Develop ITS' response to the Freedom of Information Act
23. Review Members support
24. Roll-out Content Management to departments
25. Develop website meta-data using either seamless Uk or Dublin Core methodologies
26. Re-launch the Intranet as a Staff Portal using content management system
27. Extend Members' Intranet

Committee: Scrutiny 2
Date: 4 February 2004
Agenda Item No: 6
Title: Work Programme – Police Community Support Officers
Author: Ian Orton (01799) 510 402

Summary

- 1 This report provides Scrutiny Committee with an interim report on the work of the Community Support Officers within the district.

Background

- 2 As part of the 2003/04 Scrutiny 2 work programme Members asked for information on the work of the Essex Police Community Support Officers who are based within Uttlesford. This report provides a range of interim information and a comprehensive report will be delivered by a representative from Essex Police at the 31st March meeting of the committee.
- 3 The Police Reform Act 2002 enables Chief Police Officers to recruit Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) and to provide them with limited powers. PCSO's work alongside Police Officers to provide a visible and accessible uniformed presence, to improve the quality of life in the community and to offer greater public reassurance. At it's meeting on 5th February 2003 the Resources Committee agreed to earmark £50,000 for the purposes of community warden subject to proportionate funding from Essex Police.
- 4 The £50,000 produced 4 additional PCSO's for Uttlesford with the costs split between the Council and Essex Police. Prior to the appointment of the 4 additional PCSO's discussions were held between the Council and Essex Police to agree how the performance of the 4 PCSO's would be measured and it was agreed:

The PCSO's will spend a minimum of 75% of time on the beat

*That 75% of time will be single crew i.e. not operating in pairs
They will concentrate on Abandoned Cars and issues such as alcohol,
tobacco and young people*

- 5 The PCSO's were recruited during September and trained during October 2003. They started on the beat during early November and the work will be reviewed towards the end of February 2004. There are 5 PCSO's in Uttlesford with 4 in Saffron Walden and 1 in Dunmow. During the discussions with Focus Groups about levels of Council Tax the partnership model with

Essex Police to provide the additional PCSO's was used to test views on the use of £50,000. The views were generally supportive and two of the participants at the Young Persons Forum commented that the PCSO's in Saffron Walden had been understanding.

- 6 As mentioned above this is an interim report that provides some background to the role and costs associated with the 4 PCSO's and a full report will be delivered by a representative from Essex Police to the next meeting of Essex Police.

Recommended that Members note the report

Background Papers: Best Value Reviews – Ian Orton
Policy & Performance Library: 01799 510 402 e mail iorton@uttlesford.gov.u

Committee: **Scrutiny 2**
Date: **4 February 2004**
Agenda Item No: **7**
Title: **Work Programme – Best Value Process**
Author: **Ian Orton (01799) 510 402**

Summary

- 1 This report provides Scrutiny Committee with details of the existing policy to deliver the requirements of the Best Value process during 2004/05

Background

- 2 Best Value is a duty owed by the local authority to its local community. S3 of the Local Authority Act 1999 puts a duty on Best Value authorities to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which they exercise their functions, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. Best Value was introduced in pilot form in 1999 and implemented fully from April 2000. The initial guidance from the Audit Commission was that authorities should examine all services at least once during the first five years of the Best Value process starting with worst first. In December 2001 the government amended this instruction stating that authorities should review only the services that would benefit from a review.
- 3 The Council produced guidelines for carrying out the Best Value process in the spring of 2000. The guidelines were built around the following:
- The purpose of any Best Value review is to produce a realistic action plan that will lead to substantial improvements in service delivery

- Best Value is about securing continuous improvement, greater productivity and re-aligning services to a customer focus and away from the professional view of how services should be provided
 - To achieve this managers have to secure the participation of users and the public in the review process through consultation
- 4 The Best Value process is managed through an Officer Team and a Member Team. These teams lead reviews, oversee the process and ensure that the Service Improvement Plan delivers continuous improvement. The ethos of the Best Value process is the checklist built around the 4C's of Challenge, Compare, Consult and Compete.
- 5 During the four years of Best Value the Council has carried out 16 reviews of which 4 have been reviewed by the Best Value Inspectorate. The main issues arising from the Best Value process are:
- What exactly have the reviews achieved?
 - How imaginative were the reviews?
 - Who monitors the Service Improvement Plans?
 - Which reviews have been thematic?
 - How were partners involved?
 - What was the role of Scrutiny Committees?
 - Did Members drive the reviews?
 - Are recommendations from inspections fully carried out?
 - How neutral is a Service Head in leading a review?
- 6 Scrutiny Committee may wish to consider:
- The draft Best Value Reviews for 2004/05 are: Young Persons/Older Persons/Environmental Health & Licensing/Democratic Services/Access to Services.
 - Democratic Services and Access to Services are both being reviewed during the year as part of the Corporate Plan process and will therefore be subject to review anyway.

The Performance Manager will outline some of the options Members may wish to consider to obtain more from the Best Value process during 2004/05.

Recommended that the Committee

- 7 The comments of Members are sought on the points raised in Section 6 of the report.

Background Papers: Best Value Reviews – Ian Orton
 Policy & Performance Library: 01799 510 402 e mail iorton@uttlesford.gov.uk

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 four 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
- Percentage of valid planning applications registered within 5 days

These four 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

- 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: Scrutiny 2 – Resources & Environment
Date: 4 February 2004
Agenda Item No: 9
Title: Internal audit work plan: 2004/05 – 2008/09
Author: Simon Martin (01799) 510422

Summary

- 1 This report is to seek approval for the internal audit work plan covering the period 2004/05 to 2008/09.

Background

- 2 Internal audit is part of the council's corporate governance framework. Corporate governance is defined as the system by which local authorities direct and control their functions. The requirement for adequate and effective internal audit is statutory for all local authorities.
- 3 Annual audit coverage is traditionally linked to a strategic work plan. This plan ensures all services are reviewed on a cyclical basis. The frequency with which services are audited within the cycle is dependant on the result of a risk assessment, and being reconciled to available audit resource.
- 4 Senior officers and Members are consulted on the draft work plan. Once approved it will form the basis of work for The Stevenage & Uttlesford Audit Partnership over the next five years.

Level of audit assurance

- 5 This council receives positive external audit opinion because it traditionally manages the risk of error, mis-administration, or fraud very well. As part of reaching this opinion they review internal audit coverage and work on an annual basis.
- 6 Internal audit coverage has historically been set to provide a minimum level of audit assurance. This level remains appropriate unless circumstances change at the council. Such circumstances might include a period of change to council services, or the people running them.

Draft work plan

- 7 The attached draft work plan determines audit coverage at this council for the next five years. It perpetuates the minimum level of audit assurance defined above and has been circulated to senior officers for comment. As a beneficiary of audit assurance, this report provides Members of the Scrutiny Committee with an opportunity to comment on, and to approve, the draft work plan. In any event the Audit Partnership Manager will review the work plan on a regular basis.

RECOMMENDED:

That Members approve internal audit coverage for the period 2004/05 to 2008/09.

Background Papers: None