

RISK MANAGEMENT STEERING GROUP held at COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN at 6.15 pm on 20 APRIL 2009

Present: Councillors R Clover and R Sherer (Chairman).

Officers present: Richard Auty (Head of Community Engagement), Gaynor Bradley (Community Partnerships Manager), Sheila Bronson (Audit Manager), R Millership (Head of Housing Services), Stephen Joyce (Chief Finance Officer), Michael Perry (Assistant Chief Executive), Rebecca Procter (Democratic Services Officer) and Geoff Smith (Head of Environmental Health).

RM62 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Steve Daly and Lisa Lipscombe.

RM63 MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2009 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

RM64 MATTERS ARISING

(i) Minute RM54 – Corporate Risk Register

The score for the risk rating for developing and maintaining a motivated workforce was 8, not 4.

(ii) Minute RM56 – Committee Report Risk Analysis

The Head of Community Engagement said the proposed risk analysis amendments had been referred to Performance Select Committee. Whilst the Committee had appreciated the need for the proposed changes, it had been decided that the template was to be re-written. The changes would be incorporated then.

RM65 CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

The Group reviewed corporate risks for 2008/09. Corporate risks for 2009/12 had been referred to the Strategic Management Board for review, prior to being included in the 2009/12 Corporate Risk Register. The Audit Manager highlighted the only change, regarding 07-SR-3 People (developing and maintaining a motivated and high performing workforce). At the previous meeting the Chief Finance Officer had discussed whether this risk rating should be lowered. The Chief Executive had agreed the overall risk rating should be 6.

The Audit Manager concluded by saying that a report on the draft 2009/12 risk register would be brought to the next meeting.

The Group discussed risk 07-SR-4 Environment (opposing further expansion of Stansted Airport), following previous discussion of whether it should appear in the register or the Corporate Plan. The Chief Finance Officer questioned the purpose of keeping two red status risks on the register. The role of this Group was to ensure that risks were managed, and if serious risks required action then something should be done about them.

The Community Partnerships Manager said, in relation to the other red risk 07-SR-4 Environment (developing sustainable communities by protecting and encouraging local facilities) that much work was being done by the Sustainable Uttlesford group. There was a great deal happening in the area which could be highlighted. The Audit Manager said additional information could be included in the reports.

Following further discussion, it was agreed to ask for reports from relevant officers regarding red risks to understand why the status had not changed.

AGREED that officers to whom risks showing a 'red' status were assigned to report to the Risk Management Steering Group at its next meeting.

RM66

OPERATIONAL RISK REGISTER

The Group considered the operational risk register year end review for 2008/09. The Audit Manager said risk managers had received a reminder to review all red status risks. A deadline for this task had been tied to the cut-off date for completion of divisional plans, which had been extended to 18 May. There was an ongoing review of risk management, with the possibility of a dedicated resource in the future. The aim was to reduce the number of risks appearing on the register, and to manage remaining red risks.

Members noted that car parking was now the responsibility of the parking consortium and would no longer be on the register.

Regarding insurance of collections leased to the Council by Saffron Walden Museum, the Chairman was concerned that insurance was still under review. If the collections were to be damaged or destroyed, the Council would have to meet any shortfall in insurance cover. The Assistant Chief Executive said it was a matter of policy whether the Council decided to continue with the present arrangement. The Head of Community Engagement said he would obtain an update from the Curator regarding valuations recently carried out and would report to the Group at the next meeting.

AGREED a report to be brought to the next meeting of the Risk Management Steering Group on valuation of collections and insurance cover of Saffron Walden Museum collections.

RM67

REVIEW OF CORPORATE INSURANCE

The Chief Finance Officer gave a brief update of the review he had undertaken of corporate insurance. The review comprised two broad areas, renewing terms for the year commencing October 2009, and looking strategically at insurance arrangements for 2010. Areas had been identified where existing cover should be amended, and in May a meeting would take place with the representative from Zurich. The policy would be put out to tender if it was not renewed. Insurance of the Museum collections would also be raised with Zurich.

Various points were discussed. Cover relating to employer's liability and motor insurance could be reduced in view of reduction in the number of employees. Zurich had been asked to provide a model calculating different levels of excess and premiums, as the Council was likely to benefit from making changes to nil or very low excess levels, particularly in respect of its main buildings. Property valuations would need to be updated in order to re-calculate building insurance. It was important to ensure the Council had the right level of cover and that calculations were made on the correct basis. The decision on whether to renew the contract or to tender rested with Officers. The Chief Finance Officer said a report would be brought to Finance and Administration Committee in June.

RM68

BUSINESS CONTINUITY UPDATE

A written report supplied by the ECC Emergency Planning Support Officer in his absence was considered. Unfortunately progress in obtaining divisional plans had been slow, but he was wary of introducing unrealistic targets. Reference was made to the cultural change involved in re-thinking some of the ways in which staff could work in the event of a crisis.

The report highlighted concerns regarding information flow between officers with responsibility for drawing up the plans, and, in particular, regarding the impact of the IT incident on 30 March which caused significant disruption for staff. A report into this incident was now awaited from the Chief Executive.

The report concluded that Business Continuity was still very much a work in progress, but that the Emergency Planning Support Officer hoped to be able to report more positively at the next meeting.

The Chairman noted that the IT business continuity plan had now been supplied, and the next stage was implementation of the plan. There was discussion of the concerns raised in the report, and whether the

Group had a role in giving further support in this task. It was concluded the task should be driven forward by the Strategic Management Board and Heads of Division.

There was brief discussion of existing business impact assessments within the Council. The Assistant Chief Executive said these plans did not define instances of emergencies and were therefore rather unwieldy. Now that staff structure had changed, the plans needed to be revised.

The Chairman said it was important to progress this matter, and that a realistic timetable had to be set.

AGREED Officers with responsibility for preparing business continuity plans to have submitted such a plan or to have set a date for preparing it within three months.

RM69 **HEALTH AND SAFETY UPDATE**

The Head of Environmental Health said the Health and Safety Officer was making progress in many areas. During the next months he would be updating all health and safety risk assessments onto a central database, as currently they were held in different places across the Council. It was in the interests of staff to forward these documents for processing. Resources had been made available from another project which had not been initiated to provide administrative support for this task.

RM70 **PARTNERSHIP RISK ASSESSMENT**

The Community Partnerships Manager reported on the partnership risk assessment. This was an ongoing project which covered three main areas – PFI leisure centres, which had been comprehensively assessed when they were first put together; the Local Strategic Partnership ('LSP'), and multi-agency forums. A review of action plans and terms of reference of the working groups under the LSP had been conducted during the past year. Partnership risk assessments were now being carried out, and a pro forma had been trialled very successfully. This approach would also be taken with multi agency forums.

RM71 **MEETINGS FOR 2009/10**

Meeting dates for the forthcoming year were discussed.

AGREED to hold meetings on 13 July 2009, 26 October 2009, 11 January 2010 and 12 April 2010.

The meeting ended at 7.20 pm.