

Council – 9th November 2010Report of the Chairman of the Performance and Governance committee on the meeting held on 7th September 2010

The committee has considered the following items:

- **Audit:**

- a) Baker Tilly presented their last audit of the Council's Statement of Accounts (2009/10). In future the external audit would be done by the Audit Commission. However the Government has announced that the Audit Commission would be disbanded in 2012.
- b) Mr. Arthurs (of Baker Tilly) informed Members that the accounts process for this financial year had been very smooth. He stated that three changes to the accounts had been agreed with officers but these were mainly presentational issues and did not affect the Council's bottom line. He also informed Members that Baker Tilly had reviewed the work of the Council's internal auditors and found their work to be of very good quality, which reduced the number of enquiries which the external auditors needed to undertake.
- c) A Member asked whether the Council could expect to save the £38,000 it had been charged for Use of Resources in the previous year, given that the regime had now ended. The Chief Executive stated that discussions had been ongoing with the Audit Commission regarding the fees which would be from next year and that no agreement had been reached so far.
- d) It was resolved that the 2009/10 accounts be signed off.
- e) The first quarter Internal Audit report and completion of the team's move to Dartford was noted

- **Performance Management:**

- a) The first quarter report was noted.
- b) The Chairman informed Members that sadly, Karl Sewell, Head of Policy and Performance, had needed to take retirement on ill health grounds. He was thanked for his exceptional service to the Committee and the Council.

- **Budget Monitoring** – A report of the July figures was noted.

- **Sustainable Procurement** - An update was noted and a 'Sustainable Procurement Strategy' was recommended for adoption by the Council.

- **Financial Prospects and Budget Strategy 2011/12 and beyond** – Among the views to be conveyed to Cabinet were that the majority of savings should be made earlier rather than later.

- **Treasury Management** – The annual report was commended to Cabinet.

- **Investment Strategy** – An update was considered and issues around the large amount of overnight (call) money placed with Santander were discussed. It was resolved that Cabinet be recommended to:

- a) increase the limit on amounts held with individual institutions from £3m to £5m, with the limit for any group of institutions also being £5m and
 - b) consider placing limits on the amount to be placed in call-accounts.
- **Asset Management** – The annual report was noted including information that the property team had recently taken over responsibility for managing Tandridge’s leisure centres. Among the items discussed were water usage at Argyle Road, the loss of a major tenant at Meeting Point, Swanley, and Beldham Haw in Halstead.
 - **Freedom of Information Requests** – A report was noted.
 - **Cobden Road Centre and The Shambles, Sevenoaks** – Recommendations were made to Cabinet:
 - a) The current tenants of the Cobden Road Centre each be offered financial assistance up to the sum specified in the report to enable them to relocate from the Cobden Road Centre;
 - b) The paved area of The Shambles, Sevenoaks be used to provide an outdoor café facility by way of a licence only, upon the terms detailed in the report and subject to such other terms and conditions as the Council’s legal advisors deem necessary to protect the Council’s interests.

Cllr. Clive Bruce

27th October 2010