

A meeting of the **CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL** will be held in the **COUNCIL CHAMBER, PATHFINDER HOUSE, ST MARY'S STREET, HUNTINGDON, PE29 3TN** on **WEDNESDAY, 14TH MAY 2008** at the conclusion of the meeting of the Elections Panel and you are requested to attend for the transaction of the following business:-

APOLOGIES

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

To elect a Chairman of the Panel.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 4)

To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Corporate Governance Panel held on 26th March 2008.

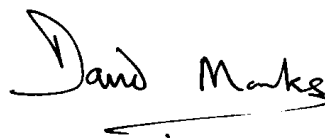
3. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

To receive from Members declarations as to personal and/or prejudicial interests and the nature of those interests in relation to any Agenda Item. Please see Notes 1 and 2 overleaf.

4. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

To appoint a Vice-Chairman of the Panel.

Dated this 6th day of May 2008

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Marks". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chief Executive

Notes

1. *A personal interest exists where a decision on a matter would affect to a greater extent than other people in the District –*
 - (a) *the well-being, financial position, employment or business of the Councillor, their family or any person with whom they had a close association;*
 - (b) *a body employing those persons, any firm in which they are a partner and any company of which they are directors;*
 - (c) *any corporate body in which those persons have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or*

(d) *the Councillor's registerable financial and other interests.*

2. *A personal interest becomes a prejudicial interest where a member of the public (who has knowledge of the circumstances) would reasonably regard the Member's personal interest as being so significant that it is likely to prejudice the Councillor's judgement of the public interest.*

Please contact Ms C Deller, Democratic Services Manager, Tel No 01480 388007/e-mail: Christine.Deller@huntsdc.gov.uk if you have a general query on any Agenda Item, wish to tender your apologies for absence from the meeting, or would like information on any decision taken by the Panel.

Members of the public are welcome to attend this meeting as observers except during consideration of confidential or exempt items of business.

Agenda and enclosures can be viewed on the District Council's website – www.huntingdonshire.gov.uk (*under Councils and Democracy*).

If you would like a translation of
Agenda/Minutes/Reports or would like a
large text version or an audio version
please contact the Democratic Services Manager
and we will try to accommodate your needs.

Emergency Procedure

In the event of the fire alarm being sounded and on the instruction of the Meeting Administrator, all attendees are requested to vacate the building via the closest emergency exit and to make their way to the car park adjacent to the Methodist Church on the High Street (opposite Prima's Italian Restaurant).

Agenda Item 2

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of the CORPORATE GOVERNANCE PANEL held in Meeting Room 1, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN on Wednesday, 26 March 2008.

PRESENT: Councillor C J Stephens – Chairman.
Councillors K J Churchill, P J Downes, J A Gray, L M Simpson and G S E Thorpe.

APOLOGY: An Apology for absence from the meeting was submitted on behalf of Councillor T V Rogers.

26. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2007 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

27. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No declarations were received.

28. CHANGES TO THE CODE OF FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

With the aid of a report by the Head of Financial Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) the Panel gave consideration to proposed changes to the Code of Financial Management.

RESOLVED

that the Council be recommended to approve the amended Code of Financial Management as appended to the report now submitted.

29. ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) seeking the Panel's endorsement of an assurance framework and updating Members on action taken to date in respect of issues identified in the last Annual Governance Statement. Having been acquainted with details of the sources of assurance, which supported the Council's governance arrangements, and considered the half yearly review of the Annual Governance Statement Action Plan, it was

RESOLVED

(a) that the assurance framework attached at Appendix A to the report now submitted be endorsed; and

- (b) that progress made to date in the achievement of the action plan supporting the Annual Governance Statement be noted.

30. EXTERNAL AUDITOR'S REPORTS

(Mr N Smith, the Council's Relationship Manager for the Audit Commission and Mrs L Standford and Mr P Winrow of Grant Thornton UK LLP, the Council's external auditors, were in attendance for consideration of these items.)

(a) DATA QUALITY AUDIT REPORT 2006/07

The Panel gave consideration to a report by the Head of Policy and Strategic Services (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) in relation to the External Auditor's report on the Council's Data Quality arrangements.

In noting that the three stage approach to the review of data quality had concluded that the Council's overall management arrangements demonstrated adequate performance in 2006/07 and that an action plan had been devised in conjunction with Council Officers to focus on areas designed to achieve compliance with the next higher level of compliance, it was

RESOLVED

- (a) that the contents of the Data Quality Audit Report 2006/07 be noted; and
- (b) that the management action plan as set out in Appendix A to the report now submitted be endorsed.

(b) USE OF RESOURCES REPORT 2006/07

The Panel gave consideration to the Council's Use of Resources Report 2006/07 (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In introducing the report, representatives of Grant Thornton UK LLP informed Members that the Council had consistently performed above Audit Commission's minimum requirements and in noting the action plan designed to assist the Council in achieving compliance with the next higher level within the framework, the Panel

RESOLVED

- that the Use of Resources Report 2006/07 be received and noted.

31. ANNUAL AUDIT AND INSPECTION LETTER

(Mr N Smith, the Council's Relationship Manager for the Audit Commission and Mrs L Standford and Mr P Winrow of Grant Thornton UK LLP, the Council's external auditors, were in attendance for consideration of this item.)

The Panel gave consideration to the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book). In respect of the performance of the Council in 2006/07, Mr Smith informed Members that the Council's rate of improvement in priority areas compared favourably against other district councils and drew the Panel's attention to the fact that the Council had consistently exceeded the Audit Commission's criteria for "performing well".

In considering the assessed performance of the Council in priority areas and the comparisons made with other Councils, the Panel exchanged views with Mr Smith about the value of some Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPI's). Having noted the overall assessment and key issues arising from the account, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter be received and noted.

32. RISK REGISTER UPDATE

With the aid of a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was appended an extract of the high "red" risks taken from the Risk Register, the Panel was acquainted with the basis on which the Register had been compiled and the process by which those risks identified had been reviewed. In noting that future update reports would only include details of new or changed entries to the Register, the Panel

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted and the arrangements introduced for managing the risks identified on the Risk Register be noted.

33. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE : INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2008

Further to Minute No. 22 the Panel received a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) to which was appended a proposed Internal Audit and Assurance Plan for the fourth months period commencing 01/04/08.

RESOLVED

that the Audit and Assurance Plan be approved.

34. INTERNAL AUDIT SERVICE: INTERIM PROGRESS REPORT

The Panel received and noted a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) summarising the progress made to date in respect of the delivery of the 2007/08 Annual Audit Plan and the performance standards achieved.

RESOLVED

that the contents of the report now submitted be noted.

35. WHISTLEBLOWING: ANNUAL REVIEW OF POLICY AND PROCEDURE

The Panel received and noted a report by the Audit and Risk Manager (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) on the outcome of the annual review of the Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure.

RESOLVED

that no changes be made to the current policy and procedure on Whistleblowing.

36. TRAVEL PLAN

Consideration was given to a report by the Head of Administration (a copy of which is appended in the Minute Book) detailing the conclusions reached by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Service Support) and Cabinet following a review of the Council's Travel Plan and those proposals impinging on Members' Allowances which would require changes to the Council's Constitution. Having dismissed a proposal to vary the Allowances recommended by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel and Cabinet, it was

RESOLVED

that full Council be invited to approve recommendations (a) – (d) in the report by the Travel Plan Working Group appointed by the Overview and Scrutiny Panel for Service Support.

Chairman