
Overview and Scrutiny Panel (Corporate and Strategic Framework)

Report of the meeting held on 5th September 2006

Matters for Information

2. FINANCIAL STRATEGY

The Panel has received an update on the financial forecast and on the approach to the current year's review of the Medium Term Plan. Members' attention has been drawn to the savings targets contained in the Financial Strategy and proposals, which have been identified by officers in conjunction with Executive Councillors.

Of the proposed savings for the period from 2006/07 to 2010/11, details of the budget for conference attendance have been requested and in terms of increased Leisure Centre Advantage membership charges, Members have discussed the risks associated with a potential loss of custom in a competitive market place and the need to review the County Council's financial contribution to the Centres.

The Panel also has discussed proposals to cease employing Modern Apprentices and to reduce grants to voluntary organisations, with regard to which some Members have expressed reservations. In discussing the deletion of the Offices Renewals Fund annual contribution, the Panel has been informed that the absence of risk is attributable to the new headquarters building becoming available in the short term. On the deletion of the contribution to Huntingdonshire Primary Care Trust for the Director of Health post, it has been established that this has been prompted by the re-organisation of primary care trusts and is in line with other District Councils in Cambridgeshire.

An additional list of possible savings, prepared by the Chairmen of the Overview and Scrutiny Panels, has been considered. Having noted that some of the proposals would have a lengthy lead-in time, the Panel has endorsed a suggestion that charging for planning advice is introduced. A suggestion that charging for CCTV be investigated also has been supported.

The Panel has endorsed the report on the Financial Strategy for submission to the Cabinet and requested that its comments and the list of alternative suggested savings by the Overview and Scrutiny Chairmen together with any Liberal Democrats' proposals for savings be taken into account as the review process continues.

3. “GROWING SUCCESS” – CORPORATE PLAN

The Panel has considered the report of the Corporate Plan Working Group on the progress of the review of the Corporate Plan. The Panel has endorsed a suggested process and timetable for the review and, at the Chairman’s suggestion, Members have agreed that the Service Support and Service Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Panels should each review half of the Plan’s aims at their October meetings with a view to feeding into the review process.

J A Gray
Chairman