

Executive - 12 February 2003

Present: Councillor Horsley (Chairman)
Councillors Bulgin, Croad, Henley, Lees, Lisgo, Mullins, Partington and Stone

Officers: Mr S Fletcher (Chief Executive), Mr J Thornberry (Director of Corporate Resources), Mr A Hartridge (Director of Development), Ms S Adam (Financial Services Manager), Mrs N Heal (Public Relations Officer) and Mr G P Dyke (Member Services Manager)

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Allgrove, Dawson, Debenham, Denington, Gill, Hall, House, Mrs Whitmarsh and Williams

(The meeting commenced at 6.10pm.)

79. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting of the Executive held on 15 January 2003 were taken as read and were signed.

80. Relocation of Taunton Livestock Market

Reported that the Council and Taunton Market Auctioneers (TMA) were still pursuing the previously agreed commitment to relocate the Livestock Market within the timescale of the lease which ended in March 2004.

Following an approach from TMA, the Executive had agreed in November 2001 (Minute 125 refers) to pursue the suggestion of a joint market operation combining the former Bridgwater Market site and Taunton Markets as part of an Agricultural Business Centre to serve the region. A Feasibility Study was commissioned and the final report was the subject of a presentation seminar on the 22 January 2003 when the problems associated with funding a joint Livestock Market operation on site close to Junction 24 were highlighted. It was now evident that the financial viability of such a proposed development at Junction 24 was questionable.

Consideration was now being given to the possibility of relocating the Livestock Market close to Wellington at Junction 26 where TMA had identified a potential interest for some time. The various options available were reported together with the Council's previous stated aims regarding relocation of the Market.

Members were reminded that a lease arrangement had been entered into with TMA in 1999. The Council and TMA had agreed a Statement of Mutual Undertaking which committed them to relocating the Market within the timetable of the lease. These arrangements had been entered into for the following three reasons:-

- The Council wanted to safeguard the medium to long-term future of the market which was not sustainable on the present site because of the existing constraints.

- The Council felt that the majority of the risks associated with the operation of the Market rested with the operator.
- The Council wanted to make better use of its asset, the Market site, for the benefit of the borough as a whole.

A further assessment of these factors had now been undertaken. To assist the local agricultural community it was felt that TMA should continue to be assisted in its efforts to relocate the Market. This should include commissioning of further information upon the viability of an area close to Junction 26. The terms of reference for such a commission was currently being discussed with the Council's partners. This Council's financial contribution to this latest work was likely to be matched by TMA and the RDA and should be found within budget.

RESOLVED that discussions continue with TMA, SWRDA and the interested parties to commission further information about possible alternatives for relocating the Taunton Livestock Market on a suitable site close to Wellington, Junction 26 on the M5.

81. Local Government Improvement Programme Final Follow-up Visit

The Peer Review of the Council had taken place between 20 and 24 November 2000. The Review Report identified a number of key issues that needed to be addressed to continue moving forward. An initial follow-up visit to the Authority had taken place on 4 December 2001 when progress was reviewed against the original Peer Review recommendations.

The final follow-up visit had taken place on 4 November 2002. The main objectives of this visit were to assess the progress which the Authority had made against the key recommendations of the original Review Report and to look at the current position of the Authority against the key themes of the Audit Commission's Corporate Performance Assessment Methodology.

The Report drew together the information gained through Workshop sessions, discussions with stakeholder groups and individual interviews. Details were submitted of how the Peer Review Team felt that its original recommendations have been dealt with.

The Review had found that overall the Council had responded very positively to the recommendations raised and had many areas of good progress to report. Particular areas the Review Team had highlighted included:-

- Bringing the future of Taunton to the forefront of local debate and raising the profile of economic development issues within the Council.
- Ensuring that the Executive and CMT operating more strategically.
- Making a sound start on the creation of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Community Planning Process.

- Embedding the Service and Performance Management framework.

There were some areas however in which it was considered that the Authority needed to continue to make progress which included the following:-

- Ensuring that it continued to sharpen its priorities and identified the areas on which it was not going to focus as well as the ones that it was.
- Focussing the attention of the LSP, the Vision Commission and other key partnerships on the achievement of outcomes and the provision of resources needed for the priority supported.
- Continuing to progress the work in relation to a communication strategy and the creation of a coherent public image.
- Ensuring that any gaps in the implication of human resources, policies and practices were identified and addressed.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

82. Housing Revenue Account - Revenue Estimates and Rent Levels 2003/2004

Considered report previously circulated which set out in detail the proposed Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2003/2004. It also included details relating to the new rent level, arrangements for calculating service charges and information on the Piper Trading Account.

Both the Housing Review Panel and the Review Board had considered this report and the recommendations submitted reflected the views raised at those meetings.

It was noted that the annual grant awarded to the Neighbourhood Care Home and Garden Scheme was to be increased from £3,500 to £10,000 and not £8,500 as recommended in the officer's report.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended that the revised Housing Revenue Account Budget be approved.

83. Housing Capital Programme 2003/2004

Submitted report which set out in detail the proposed Housing Capital Programme for 2003/2004. It included details of the resources available as well as recommendations for how they should be allocated. Investment focussed on the three areas of maintaining and improving the Council Housing stock to a decent home standard, providing grants to registered Social Landlords to build new homes and providing grants to individual home owners to reduce levels of unfitness in private sector properties.

The report had been considered by both the Housing Review Panel and the Review Board and reflected the views of those meetings. It was noted that the Budget for the Cash Incentive Scheme was to be increased from nil to £30,000.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended that the Housing Capital Programme for 2003/2004 be approved.

84. General Fund Revenue Estimates 2003/2004

Considered report previously circulated which detailed the draft forward estimates for General Fund Revenue Expenditure for 2003/04. The Report had been considered in detail by the Review Board and details of its views were submitted.

The 2002/03 budget setting report considered by Council in February 2002, had required only £83,000 of General Fund Reserves to support spending. This was a significant step forward in the Council's drive to set a sustainable budget and leave reserves in a healthy position.

Work on the Authority's medium-term financial plan had started in the summer of 2002. The financial model was refined and updated to predict the Council's financial position over a 3-year period. The model showed quite clearly the predicted budget gap that had to be resolved for 2003/04 and allowed the Executive to refine its financial strategy in the longer-term.

However in preparing the budget for the next financial year it became clear that some difficult decisions would be required in order to present a budget for 2003/04 that kept the Council's reserves at an acceptable level, the Council Tax increase at a minimum and also gave Taunton Deane the flexibility to deliver key projects. A budget gap of £1.164m had been highlighted. The Executive's proposals for closing the gap had been issued for consultation to all Councillors and the political groups. The Executive had subsequently been informed of comments received.

The General Fund Revenue Account was the Council's main fund and showed the income and expenditure relating to the provision of services. Although the Council made charges for some of its services, much of the remaining expenditure was funded by the Government through the Revenues Support Fund and National Non-Domestic Rates. Any shortfall was funded by the Council Taxpayer.

This was the first year of the new grant system for the distribution of Local Government funding. In the provisional announcement on 5 December 2002 the Government had allocated £7.066m of grant to Taunton Deane.

Further analysis of the settlement papers showed that there was also a proposal to fund Housing Benefit Administration and Council Tax Benefit Administration Grant separately this year. This added another £278k to the Council's total funding in 2003/04.

The final settlement figures had now been received and the Government's agreed contribution towards Taunton Deane's spending requirement had fallen by £28,000 from the draft figures produced in December.

Details were submitted of the consultation process that had taken place in connection with the Executive's budget proposal. The proposal for 2003/04, included details of how the Executive proposed that the budget gap should be closed.

It was noted that reserves were significantly higher than this time last year which allowed some flexibility in the budget funding decision. Details of the General Fund Reserve position were reported together with the various options now available to the Council.

The Review Board had considered the Council's budget position and had suggested one amendment relating to funding for children's play. This suggested amendment had been considered by Executive Councillors and a sum of £5,000 would be added back to the budget. The Council's Inclusion Officer would use this on children's play issues. This would however increase the budget gap very slightly.

The impact of the proposal to close the budget gap on the Council's Reserves should the current year outturn match the original current year budget prediction was reported.

The proposed budget for Taunton Deane would result in a Band 'D' Council Tax of £109.51, an increase of £2.15 (2%) on 2002/03. The estimated expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in 2003/04 amounted to £25,000 and this formed part of the total net expenditure of the Council.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended that the budget for General Fund services for 2003/04 be agreed and that:-

- (a) the transfer for any underspend in 2002/03 back to General Fund Reserves be agreed;
- (b) the use of £692,676 from General Fund Reserves to support the 2003/04 budget be agreed;
- (c) the development bids set out in the report be agreed;
- (d) the increases to fees and charges set out in the report be agreed;
- (e) the proposed 2003/04 budget being Authority expenditure of £11,262,338 and special expenses of £25,000 be agreed in accordance with the Local Government Act 1992;
- (f) the predicted General Fund Reserve balance at 31 March 2004 of £1,310,131 be noted.

85. General Fund Capital Programme

Considered report previously circulated concerning the proposed Capital Programme of the Council which projected a total programme of £5,861,831 over the next three financial years.

Reported that the financing of the General Fund Capital Programme used a number of funding sources which included Basic Credit Approvals, Supplementary Credit Approvals, Capital Receipts, Revenue Contributions to Capital (RCCO) and Developers contributions and Section 106 Agreements.

Submitted details to the proposed Capital Programme which included (a) schemes to be deleted/reduced from the programme; (b) new schemes to be included in the programme and (c) new schemes that had not been included in the programme. The amount of resources available totalled £5,861,830. The proposed programme as submitted projected a total programme of £5,621,830. This meant that there was currently a surplus of £240,000 available. Any new schemes that emerged during the lifespan of the programme would be funded through the surplus resources or through new resources such as additional Capital Receipts.

The Review Board had considered the General Fund Capital Programme and had not suggested any amendments.

RESOLVED that the Council be recommended that the General Fund Capital Programme as set out in the report be agreed.

86. Council Tax Setting 2003/04

Submitted report which made recommendations to the Council on the proposed level of Council Tax for £2003/04.

The Council was required to make an annual determination which set its gross expenditure (including the Housing Revenue Account and balances brought forward) and gross income (also including the Housing Revenue Account and balances brought forward) with the difference as its budget requirement. (This determination is set out in the resolution).

It was reported that the level of Council Tax for the Police Authority and the County Council had not yet been confirmed.

The estimated expenses chargeable to the non-parished area of Taunton in 2003/04 amounted to £25,000 and this formed part of the total net expenditure of the Council. Details were also submitted of the Parish Precepts levied and the appropriate Council Tax at Band 'D'.

The estimated balance on the Council Tax Collection Fund was a surplus of £186,321. Taunton Deane's share of this amounted to £22,140. This was reflected in the Revenue Estimates.

The overall debt outstanding on Community Charge was now approximately £2,100. The overall debt had been reduced during the year by "write-offs" of over £27,000 and it was estimated that the Community Charge collection fund as at 15 January 2003 had a surplus of £27,974. This element was not shared with the County Council or the Police Authority and was therefore available as income to the General Fund. This was reflected in the Revenue Estimates.

The Council's requirement, including Parish Precepts and non parish special expenses was £11,568,448. This was then reduced by the amount notified in respect of the Borough's Revenue Support Grant of £3,458,182 and the non-domestic rates distribution from the Pool amounting to £3,579,322.

The net amount, having taken the collection fund position into account of £4,480,830 was used to calculate the Council Tax at Band 'D' by dividing it by the total of the Council Tax base as approved by the Council in December 2002. The Council Tax for the Borough (excluding Parish Precepts and special expenses for the non-parish area) was £109.51, an increase of £2.15 (2%) compared to the 2002/03 Council Tax. The total Council Tax, including the County Council and Policy Authority Precepts, was still subject to confirmation.

RESOLVED that the Council be recommended that subject to final determination, including the Council Tax for Somerset County Council and the Police Authority, which was still to be advised:-

- (1) that it be noted that at its meeting on 17 December 2002 the Council calculated the following amounts for the year 2003/04 in accordance with the regulations made under Section 33(5) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-
- (a) 38,122.79 being the amount calculated by the Council in accordance with regulation 3 of the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, as its Council Tax base for the year.

(b)

Ash Priors	64.49	Neroche	235.83
Ashbrittle	80.93	North Curry	694.52
Bathealton	80.14	Norton Fitzwarren	652.77
Bishops Hull	1,060.29	Nynehead	143.14
Bishops Lydeard/ Cothelstone	1,747.63	Oake	318.92
Bradford on Tone	270.96	Otterford	160.35
Burrowbridge	196.94	Pitminster	435.55
Cheddon Fitzpaine	617.85	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	602.68
Chipstable	109.92	Sampford Arundel	128.16

Churchstanton	296.10	Staplegrove	707.17
Combe Florey	107.55	Stawley	112.47
Comeytrowe	2,066.07	Stoke St Gregory	369.72
Corfe	130.85	Stoke St Mary	193.02
Creech St Michael	939.06	Taunton	15,141.11
Durston	56.75	Trull	931.31
Fitzhead	120.74	Wellington	4,501.70
Halse	140.43	Wellington (Without)	288.83
Hatch Beauchamp	241.44	West Bagborough	155.29
Kingston St Mary	426.88	West Buckland	391.84
Langford Budville	211.37	West Hatch	135.36
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	195.55	West Monkton	1,058.45
Milverton	565.70	Wiveliscombe	1,036.98

being the amounts calculated by the Council, in accordance with Regulation 6 of the Regulations, as the amounts of its Council Tax Base for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

- (2) That the following amounts be now calculated by the Council for the year 2003/04 in accordance with Sections 32 to 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992:-

(a) £53,818,467 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(2)(a) to (c) of the Act.
(Gross Expenditure including amount required for working balance).

(b) £42,250,019 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 32(3)(a) to (c) of the Act.
(Gross Income including reserves to be used to meet Gross Expenditure).

(c) £11,568,448 being the amount by which the aggregate at (a) above exceeds the aggregate at (b) above, calculated by the Council in accordance with Section 32(4) of the Act, as its budget requirement for the year.

(d) £7,087,618 being the aggregate of the sums which the Council estimates will be transferred in the year from its Collection Fund to its General Fund in accordance with Section 97(3) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 (*Council Tax Surplus*) and increased by the amount of any sum which the Council estimates will be transferred from its Collection Fund to its General Fund pursuant to the Collection Fund (Community Charge) directions under Sec 98(4) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 made on 7 February 1994 (*Community Charge Surplus*).

(e) £117.54
$$\frac{(c) - (d)}{1(a)} = \frac{11,568,448 - 7,087,618}{38,122.79}$$

being the amount calculated at (c) above less the amount at (d) above, all divided by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 33(1) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year. (*Average Council Tax at Band D for Borough Including Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(f) £306,110 being the aggregate amount of all special items referred to in Section 34(1) of the Act. (*Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(g) £109.51
$$\frac{(e) - (f)}{1(a)} = \frac{117.54 - 306.110}{38,122.79}$$

being the amount at (e) above less the result given by dividing the amount at (f) above by the amount at 1(a) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no special items relate. (*Council Tax at Band D for Borough Excluding Parish Precepts and Special Expenses*).

(h)

Ash Priors	109.51	Neroche	117.99
Ashbrittle	125.57	North Curry	126.07
Bathealton	117.00	Norton Fitzwarren	126.98
Bishops Hull	122.30	Nynehead	123.48
Bishops Lydeard/ Cothelstone	121.98	Oake	119.39
Bradford on Tone	122.43	Otterford	109.51
Burrowbridge	132.00	Pitminster	116.86
Cheddon Fitzpaine	117.60	Ruishton/ Thornfalcon	127.04
Chipstable	123.16	Sampford Arundel	132.53
Churchstanton	126.99	Staplegrove	118.70
Combe Florey	120.20	Stawley	118.40
Comeytrove	115.56	Stoke St Gregory	125.06
Corfe	116.58	Stoke St Mary	114.69
Creech St Michael	120.69	Taunton	111.16
Durston	110.21	Trull	117.03
Fitzhead	123.59	Wellington	126.01
Halse	121.97	Wellington (Without)	121.63
Hatch Beauchamp	120.28	West Bagborough	115.95
Kingston St Mary	123.57	West Buckland	127.37
Langford Budville	117.32	West Hatch	123.41
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	117.18	West Monkton	116.36
Milverton	120.12	Wiveliscombe	123.98

being the amounts given by adding to the amount at (g) above, the amounts of the special

item or items relating to dwellings in those parts of the Council's area mentioned above divided in each case by the amount at 1(b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34(3) of the Act, as the basic amounts of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which one or more special items relate.

(Council Taxes at Band D for Borough Parish and Special Expenses).

- (i) See overleaf

9.2.2(i)

Valuation Band	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Ash Priors	73.01	85.17	97.34	109.51	133.85	158.18	182.52	219.02
Ashtrittle	83.72	97.66	111.62	125.57	153.48	181.38	209.29	251.14
Bathelton	78.00	91.00	104.00	117.00	143.00	169.00	195.00	234.00
Bishops Hull	81.54	95.12	108.71	122.30	149.48	176.65	203.84	244.60
Bishops Lydeard/Cothelstone	81.32	94.87	108.42	121.98	149.09	176.19	203.30	243.96
Bradford On Tone	81.62	95.22	108.82	122.43	149.64	176.84	203.30	244.86
Burrowbridge	88.00	102.66	117.33	132.00	161.34	190.67	220.00	264.00
Cheddton Fitzpaine	78.40	91.46	104.53	117.60	143.74	169.87	196.00	235.20
Chipstable	82.11	95.79	109.47	123.16	150.53	177.90	205.27	246.32
Churchstanton	84.66	98.77	112.88	126.99	155.21	183.43	211.65	253.98
Combe Florey	80.14	93.48	106.84	120.20	146.92	173.62	200.34	240.40
Comeytrove	77.04	89.88	102.72	115.56	141.24	168.92	192.60	231.12
Creche	77.72	90.67	103.62	116.58	142.49	168.39	194.30	233.16
Creech St Michael	80.46	93.87	107.28	120.69	147.51	174.33	201.15	241.38
Durston	73.48	85.71	97.96	110.21	134.71	159.19	183.69	220.42
Fitzhead	82.40	96.12	109.86	123.59	151.06	178.52	205.99	247.18
Halse	81.32	94.86	108.42	121.97	149.08	176.18	203.29	243.94
Hatch Beauchamp	80.19	93.55	106.91	120.28	147.01	173.74	200.47	240.56
Kingston St Mary	82.58	96.11	109.84	123.57	151.03	178.49	205.95	247.14
Langford Budville	78.22	91.24	104.28	117.32	143.40	169.46	195.54	234.64
Lydeard St Lawrence/Tolland	78.12	91.14	104.16	117.18	143.22	169.26	195.30	234.36
Milverton	80.08	93.42	106.77	120.12	146.82	173.51	200.20	240.24
Neroche	78.66	91.77	104.88	117.99	144.21	170.43	196.65	235.98
North Curry	84.05	98.05	112.06	126.07	154.09	182.10	210.12	252.14
Norton Fitzwarren	84.66	98.76	112.87	126.98	155.20	183.41	211.64	253.96
Nynehead	82.32	96.04	109.76	123.48	150.92	178.36	205.80	246.96
Oake	79.60	92.85	106.12	119.39	145.93	172.45	198.99	238.78
Otterford	73.01	85.17	97.34	109.51	133.85	158.18	182.52	219.02
Pitminster	77.91	90.89	103.87	116.86	142.83	168.80	194.77	233.72
Ruishton/Thornfalcon	84.70	98.80	112.92	127.04	155.28	183.50	211.74	254.08
Sampford Arundel	88.36	103.07	117.80	132.53	161.99	191.43	220.89	265.06
Staplegrave	79.14	92.32	105.51	118.70	145.08	171.45	197.84	237.40
Stawley	78.94	92.08	105.24	118.40	144.72	171.02	197.34	236.80
Stoke St Gregory	83.38	97.26	111.16	125.06	152.86	180.64	208.44	250.12
Stoke St Mary	76.46	89.20	101.94	114.69	140.18	165.66	191.15	229.38
Taunton	74.11	86.45	98.81	111.16	135.87	160.56	185.27	222.32
Trull	78.02	91.02	104.02	117.03	143.04	169.04	195.05	234.06
Wellington	84.01	98.00	112.01	126.01	154.02	182.01	210.02	252.02
Wellington W/out	81.09	94.60	108.11	121.63	148.66	175.69	202.72	243.26
West Bagborough	77.30	90.18	103.06	115.95	141.72	167.48	193.25	231.90
West Buckland	84.92	99.06	113.22	127.37	155.68	183.98	212.25	254.74
West Hatch	82.28	95.98	109.70	123.41	150.84	178.26	205.69	246.82
West Monkton	77.58	90.50	103.43	116.36	142.22	168.07	193.94	232.72
Wiveliscombe	82.66	96.42	110.20	123.98	151.54	179.08	206.64	247.96

being the amounts given by multiplying the amounts at (h) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in valuation band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwellings listed in different valuation bands (Council Tax for Individual Parishes and the Borough).

That it be noted that for the year 2002/03 the Somerset County Council and the Avon & Somerset Police Authority have stated the following amounts in precepts issued to the Council, in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992, for each of the categories of dwellings shown below:-

Somerset County Council	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Avon & Somerset Police Authority	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

87. Borrowing Limit

Reported that Local Authorities were statutorily required to determine for each Financial Year (a) their overall borrowing limit; (b) their short-term borrowing limit, and (c) a limit on the proportion of interest that was payable by them at variable rates.

The determination had to be made by the Council before the beginning of the Financial Year.

The borrowing limit was a total of (d) the current level of outstanding debt; (e) the anticipated authorised new borrowing in 2003/04; (f) provision for possible temporary revenue borrowing in anticipation of income being received.

Limits set by the Council in February 2002 had been in place for a number of years and were still considered to be adequate. No changes were therefore proposed.

RESOLVED that Council be recommended that for 2003/04:-

- (a) the overall borrowing be fixed at £44,000,000;
- (b) the short-term borrowing at any time should not exceed £11,000,000 representing 25% of the borrowing limit, and
- (c) that no more than 50% of the total amount of interest payable may be at variable interest rates.

88. Exclusion of Press and Public

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the item numbered 15 on the Agenda because of the likelihood that exempt information would otherwise be disclosed relating to Clause 1 of Schedule 12(a) of the Local Government Act 1972.

89. Capacity to Improve

Submitted report regarding the Authority's current capacity to meet corporate challenges and how improvement could be achieved.

It was felt that although things were generally well in the Authority, there was room for improvement. The Directorate structure had been successfully implemented and had brought more co-ordination and cohesion to services where there were clear overlaps.

Since Council had approved the last major restructure of the Authority's management in March 1997, Local Government had changed dramatically. The current officer core was stretched to capacity for a number of reasons.

Although a number of initiatives aimed at improving the management of the Authority had been successfully introduced, there was still concern about the resources in a number of service areas. It was on these areas that attention needed to

be focussed to ensure that sufficient resources were available to enable improvements to be made. Concern was also expressed about the Council's ability to resource large scale projects.

It was felt that the existing Service Unit Manager structure was no longer adequate to cope with the many changes that had taken place in Local Government in recent years. In addition the gap between the role of Directors and the devolved operational responsibilities of the Service Unit Managers reduced the ability of the organisation to manage large-scale change.

The Authority's current management structure based around Service Unit Managers was well suited to providing good quality services but could not easily handle the improvement and development of those services which was expected and was the primary purpose of Best Value and a comprehensive performance assessment régime.

The current structure was extremely flat with a substantial differential between the Service Unit Managers and Directors both in terms of responsibilities and salary. This had a limiting effect on the ability of the Service Unit Managers to gain the experience necessary to progress.

It was necessary now to create some space for Managers to better manage by being able to plan ahead and monitor their services properly. Details of the proposals suggested to achieve this aim was submitted.

RESOLVED that the following new posts be created:-

- (a) Head of Performance
- (b) Head of Finance
- (c) Head of Environment
- (d) Head of Housing

The following posts to have enhanced responsibilities and their titles changed:-

- (a) Principal Audit and Review Manager to become Corporate Performance Manager
- (b) Computer Auditor to become Principal Auditor
- (c) Mr R Evans to be appointed to the post of Head of Performance
- (d) Mr A Gladstone-Smith be appointed to the post of Corporate Performance Manager and the post of Principal Audit and Review Officer be deleted.
- (e) Ms S Adam be appointed to the post of Head of Finance
- (f) Mr C Gunn be appointed to the post of Principal Auditor
- (g) The new post of Head of Environment and Chief Environmental Health Officer be "ring-fenced" to the existing Chief Environmental Health Officer and Public Safety Unit Manager

- (h) Purchasing function be transferred to the Corporate Resources Directorate
- (i) Finance Manager post be filled by “ring-fencing” to the Accountancy Section.

(The meeting ended at 8.10 pm.)

