

TAUNTON DEANE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COUNCIL MEETING 19 FEBRUARY 2005

Part 1

To deal with written questions to and receive recommendations to the Council from the Executive.

1. COUNCILLOR WILLIAMS – LEADER OF THE EXECUTIVE

Internal Audit Partnership

Together with South Somerset District Council and Mendip District Council, this Council have proposed the creation of a partnership to operate Internal Audit Services. This will bring significant benefits to all partners in terms of quality, sustainability and resources. The partnership is to be formed using the Joint Committee model outlined in Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972. Taunton Deane and South Somerset will establish an Internal Audit Partnership with effect from 1 April 2005. Mendip will join the partnership on the expiration of their current contract with Capita on 1 July 2005.

Detailed consideration has been given to the principles of how the partnership will operate. This proposal has also been considered by the Council's Corporate Governance Committee who have recommended that the proposals be agreed.

There are clear advantages to entering into an Internal Audit Partnership including quality, sustainability and resource issues.

The Council are RECOMMENDED that the following arrangements be confirmed:

1. An Internal Audit Partnership (initially between Taunton Deane Borough Council, South Somerset District Council, and Mendip District Council) be established under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972.
2. The Internal Audit Partnership commence on 4 April 2005 between Taunton Deane Borough Council and South Somerset District Council, with Mendip District Council joining on 1 July 2005.
3. The initial contribution of £20,000 be found from existing approved budgets and be repaid over five years.

4. The final agreement of the Partnership Business Plan, host authority arrangements, legal agreement and working practices be delegated to the Head of Resources (subject to the Partnership demonstrating a break-even position within 5 years).
5. Two Councillors be appointed as representatives of this Council on the Partnership Oversight Board. The Members Services Manager to liaise with the Group Leaders on the most appropriate method of filling these posts.

Councillor John Williams

2. COUNCILLOR EDWARDS – ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Review of Public Conveniences

The Executive have given consideration to the implementation of the outcome of the Review of Public Conveniences.

The recommendation of the Health and Leisure Review Panel to carry out a series of investments and disinvestments in public conveniences has previously been endorsed by me. The principle behind the decision was to use funds raised from the sale of some sites to improve the quality of the remaining facilities and generate ongoing revenue savings.

There is a consensus amongst the North Taunton Councillors that fitting out the shell of a public convenience, built as part of the Surestart project was not part of the solution. Research is therefore being carried out on the provision of a community facility within existing premises in the vicinity of Priorswood Place. The forecasted costs of developing the Vivary Hub have increased and for supervised toilets to be provided this project will require further financial assistance.

Tenders have been received for the rebuilding of North Street Car Park toilets in Wellington. These are however, in excess of the current budget allocation.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED that the implementation plan and necessary changes to the approved capital programme be agreed.

Councillor Mark Edwards

