Executive – 10 January 2007

Present: Councillor Williams (Chairman)
                    Councillors Bishop, Mrs Bradley, Cavill and Mrs Lewin-Harris

Officers: Mrs P James (Chief Executive), Ms S Adam (Strategic Director), Mr P Weaver (Head of Environment and Leisure), Mr T Burton (Development Control Manager), Ms J Sillifant (ISiS Project Manager) and Mr G P Dyke (Democratic Services Manager)

Also Present: Councillors Lisgo and Wedderkopp.

(The meeting commenced at 6.15 pm.)

1.   **Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on 6 December 2006 were taken as read and were signed.

2.   **Risk Management Strategy**

Reported that following extensive research together with newly devised tools for managing risk the Risk Management Strategy Policy and Procedures had been completely rewritten and updated.

The document had been assessed by the Audit Commission during the latest Direction of Travel audit and was considered to be an example of best practice. The Corporate Management Team had been consulted on the document and had endorsed it.

The Corporate Governance Committee had scrutinised this document at its December meeting and had recommended that the Executive adopt it as the Council's Strategy and Policy for the Management of Risk. A full copy of the Risk Strategy Policy and Procedures document had been circulated to all members of the Executive.

RESOLVED that the document be adopted as the Council's Strategy and Policy for the Management of Risk.

3.   **Improving Services in Somerset (ISiS) Programme Update**

The Executive had last considered progress on the ISiS Programme at its meeting on 5 April 2006 (Minute 31/2006 refers). At that meeting Members had received a presentation and had reviewed:

●   The outline business case.
●   The selection of shortlisted bidders.
●   The options appraisal undertaken.

- Consultation arrangements.
- The next steps.

Since that time, Members had had the opportunity to hear from the shortlisted bidders directly via various presentations and to also hear a presentation on project progress at the December Members' Briefing. A further Members' Briefing, to which all Councillors had been invited, had been arranged for 30 January 2007.

An update was now submitted on the overall ISiS Programme, and in particular:

- The procurement process so far (including the ITN, evaluation and programme to closure).
- An update on the position of Avon and Somerset Constabulary.
- An update on Programme risks.
- An update on the external view of ISiS.
- The arrangements for managing the change process within Taunton Deane Borough Council.
- The Programme budget position.

RESOLVED that the updated position on the ISiS Programme be noted and both Officers and Councillors be thanked for the dedication and commitment shown to this project.

4.   **Provision of Information Technology in Development Control**

Submitted report previously circulated which sought approval in principle to replace the current in-house software package for planning application recording, monitoring and historic data retention software with an established external software package.

The current Development Control processing software was installed in March 2006 and was anticipated to be the "next generation" of the planning application recording, monitoring and historic data retention which was initially developed in-house in 1985.

The national planning system was currently undergoing significant changes and unfortunately the existing software had not proved to be suitable.

The quality of the Service which was being provided to customers had declined and Best Value Performance Indicators had fallen. This had resulted in a reduction in Planning Delivery Grant received. The Council had gone from being one of the best performing authorities in the south west to being in the bottom quartile. In order to incorporate the necessary enhancement to make the system satisfactory to meet the current needs it was anticipated that a period of 18 months would be required. In view of the problems currently being experienced it was felt necessary to develop an external Planning software package. This would not only improve the Planning function but would assist greatly in delivery of a number of the Council's Corporate

Priorities. It was anticipated that the project would progress through initial stages in preparing detailed specifications and finding out accurate costs.

RESOLVED that:

(i)   the proposal to replace the current in-house software applications for planning application recording, monitoring and historic data retention be agreed in principle;

(ii)   Council be recommended that a Supplementary Estimate from General Fund Reserves be made of £80,000. The ongoing revenue costs would be funded from within existing Development budgets.

(The meeting ended at 7.34 pm.)