

FINANCE AND MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

13th June 2002

**PRESENT:-**

**Labour Group**

Councillor Wilkins (Chair), Councillor Pabla (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Carroll, Evens, Knight, Richards, Southerd, Southern and Whyman.

**Conservative Group**

Councillors Bale (substitute for Councillor Shaw), Hood (substitute for Councillor Lemmon), Mrs. Walton (substitute for Councillor Harrison) and Mrs. Wheeler.

**In Attendance**

Councillor Bell (Labour Group).

**APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence from the Meeting were received from Councillors Harrison, Lemmon and Shaw (Conservative Group).

FM/1. **MINUTES**

The Open Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th April 2002 were taken as read, approved as a true record and signed by the Chair

FM/2. **MEMBERS' QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

(a) **Appointment of the Service and Financial Planning Working Panel**

Councillor Whyman advised that a Meeting of the Service and Financial Planning Working Panel was to be held on Wednesday, 26th June 2002 at 2.30 p.m. to consider initial budget proposals and to make recommendations to the next Meeting of the Committee.

In accordance with the political proportionality rules and the previous composition of the Panel, Councillor Whyman proposed that six Labour Group Members be nominated (being the Leader, Deputy Leader and four Chairs of the Policy Committees) plus two Conservative Group Members.

Councillor Mrs. Wheeler advised that it was likely that the Conservative Group would be represented by herself and Councillor J. Lemmon and agreed to confirm this at a future date.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the following Members be appointed to the Service and Financial Planning Working Panel:-***

***Councillors Brooks, Carroll, Southerd, Southern, Whyman and Wilkins (Labour Group).***

***Councillor Mrs. Wheeler and one other Member to be confirmed (Conservative Group).***

(b) Budget Review – Scoring of Service Developments

It was reported that a Meeting to Score the Service Development proposals was to be held at 9.30 a.m. on 14th June 2002 and would be attended by the three Policy Committee Chairs and one Conservative Group Member.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That the following Members be appointed to the Panel convened to consider the scoring of Service Developments:-***

***Councillors Southerd, Southern and Wilkins (Labour Group).***

***Councillor Mrs. Wheeler (Conservative Group).***

Civic Service

The Chair advised that the Civic Service was to be held on 30th June 2002 at 10.30 a.m. at St. George's Church, Ticknall. Members were asked to confirm their attendance to Dawn Bircher in order that seating and catering details could be finalised.

**MATTER DELEGATED TO COMMITTEE**

FM/3. **SERVICE PLANS – MONITORING REPORT**

The views of the Committee were requested on the Service Plans – Monitoring Reports for Legal and Members' Services, Personnel and Development, Economic Development (in respect of Asset Management), Financial Services, Revenue Services, Internal Audit, IT and Customer Services and Policy and Best Value.

Legal and Members' Services

On the matter of elections Councillor Carroll queried the amount of resources which were being lent to this particular function taking into account the District Council elections in 2003. Councillor Mrs. Wheeler queried why the part-time post allocation had not been implemented and expressed concern in this regard. In response to the question on the part-time post the Chief Executive advised that the Principal Democratic Services Officer would be providing direct managerial support to elections in addition to seeking increased support in this area.

Councillor Mrs. Wheeler also advised that she had concerns regarding the casual temporary support for the register of election function which she would speak to officers about separately.

Personnel and Development

Councillor Southerd queried when the equal opportunities training for Members would be taking place. Members felt that it was vital that such training was held and supported inter-active training between officers and Members.

Councillor Whyman reported that the Single Status Job Evaluation Scheme would be completed by 1st April 2004 and emphasised the importance of not rushing the implementation of this scheme in order to get it right first time.

Economic Development

A progress report on the disposal of the Council Depot was sought at the earliest opportunity, to be submitted to the Council's Environmental Services Committee.

Financial Services

Members queried the section referring to the Absence Management Policy and were advised that this was a general section which applied to all service plans and procedures which were being applied throughout all departments within the Council.

Revenue Services

On the subject of E-Government, Councillor Richards queried what assurances customers were to receive about the correct use of data held, in particular with regard to benefit information and was advised that the Council had proper procedures in place to ensure the correct use of data.

Councillor Southern queried the response times for updating bailiffs' records and expressed concern regarding the use of inaccurate data. The Revenue Services Manager explained the process undertaken to ensure that information held by bailiffs was up to date.

Councillor Whyman acknowledged that the revenue service had a low profile but recognised the valuable service provided.

Internal Audit

The Chief Finance Officer outlined the Department's achievements and highlighted the areas for improvement. Councillor Mrs. Wheeler supported the section included within the Service Plan on Risk Management.

IT and Customer Services

The Chief Finance Officer advised that a report was to be submitted to the next Meeting of the Committee on the Structure of the IT and Customer Services Division. It was noted that the process for system changes had commenced and there was a move from in-house designed technology to purchased systems.

Councillor Carroll advised that the IT equipment held in the Members Room was welcomed but referred to the possibility for Members to have PC's at home. She asked whether as the replacement of old systems took place redundant PC's could be used by Members to improve their access to IT. The Chief Finance Officer noted the proposal but referred to the officer support issue linked to such an initiative. The issue of providing laptop computers for Members was noted.

Policy and Best Value

The Chair referred to the use of the Citizens Panel and asked that Members be kept informed of the consultation exercise outcomes. Councillor Whyman referred to the roles of the Policy and Best Value division and highlighted the Best Value Performance Plan and Scrutiny Development work undertaken and acknowledged the efforts of the staff in the section.

**RESOLVED:-**

***That Members approve the Service Plan Monitoring Reports submitted for the Legal and Members Services, Personnel and Development, Economic Development (in respect of Asset Management), Financial Services, Revenue Services, Internal Audit, IT and Customer Services and Policy and Best Value Divisions.***

FM/4. **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 (AS AMENDED BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT [ACCESS TO INFORMATION] ACT 1985)**

**RESOLVED:-**

***That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the Meeting as it is likely, in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings, that there would be disclosed exempt information as defined in the paragraphs of Part 1 of the Schedule 12A of the Act indicated in brackets after each item.***

**MINUTES**

***The Exempt Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th April 2002 were received.***

**MEMBERS QUESTIONS AND REPORTS**

***Councillor Whyman gave a verbal report with regard to establishing a Remuneration Working Panel of the Council.***

**FINANCIAL REGULATIONS D2.4(b) – WRITE OFFS (Paragraph 7)**

***The Committee agreed that the sums outlined in the report be approved for write-off under the provisions of Financial Regulation D2.4(b).***

**NATIONAL PAY NEGOTIATIONS (Paragraph 11)**

***The Committee noted the recent developments on the National Pay Negotiations.***

**ANNUAL REGRADING APPLICATIONS (Paragraph 1)**

***The Committee approved a course of action with regard to the regrading applications outlined in the report.***

**RURAL RATE RELIEF (Paragraph 5)**

***The Committee approved the application for discretionary relief received from the organisation outlined in the report and approved that 50% relief be granted.***

**DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF (Paragraph 5)**

- (a) The Committee refused an application for additional discretionary relief from the organisation outlined in the report but agreed to continue to grant 80% relief from the rate charge.***
- (b) The Committee refused an application for additional discretionary relief from the organisation outlined in the report but agreed to continue to grant 80% relief from the rate charge.***

**REDUCTION OR REMISSION OF THE NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE (Paragraph 5)**

***The Committee approved an application from the individuals outlined in the report and agreed that 80% relief be granted.***

**FOOTPATHS AGENCY (Paragraphs 1 & 11)**

***The Committee agreed a course of action with regard to the Council's Footpaths Agency.***

P.J. WILKINS

CHAIR