

**EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL
CORPORATE GOVERNANCE GROUP MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY, 7 MARCH 2007
(9.00 - 11.15 AM)**

Present: P Haywood (Joint Chief Executive) (Chairman) J Scott (Joint Chief Executive), J Akerman (Chief Internal Auditor), C O'Boyle (Head of Legal, Administration and Estates), R Palmer (Head of Finance) and I Willett (Head of Research and Democratic Services)

**Apologies for
Absence:**

Place: P. Haywood's Office, Civic Offices, Epping

90. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING - 31.1.07

Agreed subject to an amendment to Minute 86(k) (Audit and Governance Committee) to delete the word "corporate" in the second line and substitute "Audit and".

91. MATTERS ARISING

None for report.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None for this meeting.

93. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

Agreed that the draft Financial Regulations prepared by the Officer Working Party be approved subject to the following changes:

5.29 - amend references to disposal of surplus equipment by adding (a) references to the maintenance of records of disposal of surplus equipment, (b) a prohibition on the disposal of ICT equipment unless the Head of ICT and the Chief Internal Auditor agree that this is appropriate, (c) a prohibition on sale of items which might constitute a health and safety hazard unless the Head of Environmental Services and the Chief Internal Auditor agree that this is appropriate, and (d) disposal of surplus equipment to staff only being agreed by the Chief Internal Auditor in consultation with the appropriate Head of Service.

Appendix E (Section 5) - Financial Systems and Procedures: include reference to the Head of Finance acting as the Council's specified person for the purposes of the Council's dispute resolution procedure.

ACTION:

I Willett to prepare a report for the Constitutional Affairs Standing Scrutiny Panel.

94. AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE (CFO/CIA)

Noted that the Council on 20 February 2007 had agreed proposals for appointing an Audit and Governance Committee with effect from the new Council year.

Noted that press notices and internet information will be published next week together with a recruitment pack.

Noted that one member of the Panel appointed at the Council meeting felt unable to take part in this recruitment exercise due to pressure of other work.

Agreed that J Scott should have a discussion with the member in question to establish whether there was any possibility of his taking part.

Agreed that the Head of Finance and the Chief Internal Auditor support the Interview Panel.

Noted that arrangements were in place to hold a training session for all members of the Council including the independent members of the Audit and Governance Committee and the Councillor members in the new Council year.

ACTION:

J Scott to discuss involvement in the Panel with Councillor S Murray. J Akerman/R Palmer to progress interview arrangements.

95. RISK MANAGEMENT (CFO)

Agreed that the future structure of the risk matrix for the Council should remain unaltered.

Agreed that the corporate risk register be updated as follows:

Risk 3 - revise rating to B2.

Risk 4 - revise rating to B2.

Risk 20 - revise rating to C2 in view of successful contingency plan in response to failure of previous Waste Management Contract.

Risk 5 - revise rating to D3 as threat of re-organisation involving this Council had receded.

Risk 8 - revise rating to C2 as the Council now had a response plan for pandemic flu.

Risk 1 - no change.

Risk 13 - revise rating to A2 as concerns regarding corporate capacity will be addressed as part of the forthcoming top management restructure review.

Risk 11 - no change.

Risk 9 - revise rating to D3 as Council decisions and a new timescale for moving towards a single Chief Executive had now been agreed by the Council.

Risk 10 - no change at present: reassess when the new top management structure is in place.

Risk 17 - no change.

Risk 19 - no change.

Risk 6 - delete: Council is no longer a politically balanced authority.

Risk 7A - no change.

Risk 2 - no change.

Risk 7B - no change.

Risk 16 - no change.

Risk 21 - no change.

Risk 14 - no change.

Risk 15 - no change.

Risk 22 - no change.

Risk 12 - no change.

Agreed that R Palmer should review the consequences column in the table in respect of those risks which had been re-classified.

ACTION:

R Palmer to pursue.

96. STANDARDS COMMITTEE (DMO)

(a) New Code of Conduct

Noted that the Standards Committee at its meeting on 27 February 2007 had responded to the Government consultation regarding a new Code of Conduct for Councillors.

(b) Investigations/Adjudications

Noted that there was only one complaint which was currently being examined by the Standards Board for England which might be referred for local investigation and adjudication.

(c) Standards Committee - Independent Vacancy

Noted that four applications had been received for the position and that interviews were likely to be held on the 19 March 2007.

(d) Braintree District Council - Investigation

Noted that a response was awaited for a request for further information from Braintree District Council which had approached other Councils in Essex regarding an investigation of a complaint against one of its members.

97. DATE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Next meeting: meeting on 18 April 2007 was cancelled and re-arranged to 16 May 2007.

Future meetings after that date remained unchanged.