

POLICY & RESOURCES / CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

A meeting of the Policy & Resources / Corporate Development Panel was held on Thursday 9 April 2009 commencing at 10.00 am in the Members Conference Room at Police Headquarters.

PRESENT	Miss Pam Andrews-Mawer, Councillor Barry Coppinger (Chair), Mr Peter Hadfield, Mr Alf Illingworth TD JP, Councillor Hazel Pearson OBE, Mr Aslam Hanif, and Councillor Steve Wallace (Vice Chair).
OFFICIALS	Mr John Bage (CE) Mr Derek Bonnard, Mrs Ann Hall, Mr Dave Beswick and Miss Kate Rowntree (CC).
ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES	Councillor Ron Lowes and Councillor Victor Tumilty

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Dave McLuckie (ex officio), Mr Peter Race MBE (ex officio), Mr Chris Coombs, Mr Ted Cox JP, Mr Sean Price, and Mr Joe McCarthy.

DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests.

Action

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES / CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT PANEL HELD ON 5 MARCH 2009

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

MINUTES OF THE POLICY & RESOURCES / CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT PANEL HELD ON 19 MARCH 2009

The minutes were agreed as a true and accurate record.

OUTSTANDING RECOMMENDATIONS

ORDERED that:-

1. the Outstanding Recommendations be noted.

BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 28 FEBRUARY 2009

The Assistant Chief Officer Finance and Commissioning presented the report. Members had approved a Net Budget Requirement (NBR) of £124,623k and budgeted revenue expenditure of £145,301k, the balance of expenditure being funded by specific grants, other income and transfers from reserves. The report set out the progress against delivery of that budget and was part of the process introduced by the Authority to maintain prudent financial management.

The Authority is on target to deliver the £750k provision against the cost of a stand alone air support unit in 2009/10

and the agreed budget of £300k from the non-recurring costs of the exploratory procurement exercise for ICT services, which is to be set aside from additional savings generated during the year.

Members were informed that Project I will run significantly into 2009-10 and Members agreed at their meeting on 5th February 2009 that any money remaining unspent at the end of the 2008-9 financial year, along with any under spends within the ICT revenue budget, would be earmarked for the completion of this project.

Members also approved at their meeting on 5th February 2009 to set up an earmarked reserve totaling £810k for Injury/Medical Retirements. This had enabled the Medical Retirements budget to be reduced on a non-recurring basis in 2009/10 and 2010/11 contributing to the achievement of a balanced budget in 2009/10 whilst retaining the resilience to make Medical Retirements when appropriate.

Members were informed that at their meeting on the 5th March 2009, members approved the requested carry forwards of £662k be earmarked for use in 2009-10.

The position to date and the break-even year-end forecast shown at Appendix A reflect the position to date. No material risks other than those mentioned in the report or set out in the Risk Monitor at Appendix D had been identified for the delivery of the forecast position for 2008/09. Although some pressures have emerged there are currently sufficient resilience in budgets to absorb them in the current year.

ORDERED that:-

1. the contents of the report be noted.

CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT TO 28 FEBRUARY 2009

The Assistant Chief Officer Finance and Commissioning presented the progress against the delivery of the Capital Programme for 2008/09 and the Capital Plan for 2008/11 which Members had approved at their meeting on 28 February 2008. This included both new schemes; schemes brought forward from 2007/08 and unallocated funding. Members were asked to consider two changes to the programme.

Procurement of a Vetting Computer System at a cost of £15.0k
In recent years, the vetting process had become more high profile with increasing demands. The process currently relies on a heavily paper-based system, the introduction of this software solution will result in a more consistent and efficient process. Funding for this system would come from the revenue budget within the Professional Standards Unit.

The second element would be the adding back of £13.1k of the Communication Service Provider – Secure Information

Software budget, due to the forecast completion of the project, under budget.

The report set out the progress made in delivering the Capital Programme for 2008/09 and recommendations to make optimum use of the capital resource available to the Authority to refresh and develop the asset base for policing in the 21st Century in line with the vision of 'Putting People First'.

ORDERED that:-

1. the contents of the report be noted.
2. the additional procurement of a Vetting Computer System with a budget of £15k to be covered by a revenue transfer be agreed.
3. the adding back to unallocated monies the budget of the following project: Communication Service Provider – Secure Information Software - £13.1k be agreed.

TREASURY MANAGEMENT TO 28 FEBRUARY 2009

The Assistant Chief Officer Finance and Commissioning presented the report to Members.

Local Authorities' (including Police Authorities) treasury management activities are prescribed by the Local Government Act 2003. Essentially a police authority may borrow or invest for any purpose relevant to its functions, under any enactment, or 'for the purpose of the prudent management of its financial affairs'.

An investment strategy for 2008/09 was agreed by Members at their meeting on 28 February 2008. Due to the unprecedented turbulence of the financial markets, this initial strategy had been updated to enable speed of action when responding to emerging risks to the Authority's investment portfolio. At their meeting on the 30 September 2008, Members resolved to delegate authority to amend the approved List of Counterparties and the investment limits with institutions to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Deputy Section 151 officer. This delegated authority would automatically be withdrawn at 31 March 2009. At their meeting on 26th February 2009, Members agreed to extend this period of delegated authority to 30th September 2009.

The report updated Members on the status of the Authority's investments and borrowing. It is part of the process introduced by the Authority to maintain prudent financial management.

Members were informed that given the current unprecedented turbulence and uncertainty in financial markets and financial institutions, the protection of the Authority's underlying investments is of utmost importance. The investment strategy

that underpins this has recently been reviewed and amended to enable a quick response to changes in market conditions as they take place. Consequently, the Authority continues to manage its cash resources in a low risk yet highly liquid manner.

ORDERED that:-

1. the contents of the report be noted.

MICROSOFT ENTERPRISE AGREEMENT

The Deputy Chief Constable informed Members of the requirement to refresh the Microsoft software estate and to seek approval to renew the Enterprise Agreement.

Following the launch of the national Information Systems Improvement Strategy (ISIS), Project I was set up to look at how ICT services are delivered to officers and staff, and to evaluate how the Force would meet the challenges of delivering ISIS.

Members were informed that as a result of Project I all ICT schemes have been deferred. As part of the 2009/10 Capital Programme & Long Term Capital Plan 2010/13 Members agreed that ICT schemes will now be reviewed and risk assessed and only taken forward if deemed critical to the continuation of the service or to meet mandatory requirements such as IMPACT.

The Authority did not renew the last Enterprise Agreement (EA) with Microsoft when it came to an end in June 2005. Microsoft products are a key element of the IT infrastructure. They support many business processes such as personal productivity (word processing, spreadsheets, e-mail and calendar), collaborative working via Sharepoint and also underpin major system such as IRIS, TPAM and intranet briefing.

There is a need to commence the upgrade to these products in 2009/10 in order to maintain an up to date infrastructure and more critically to maintain support from 3rd party suppliers.

The most cost effective way for the Authority to refresh the entire estate of desktop Microsoft software was to enter an Enterprise Agreement (EA). An EA entitles an organisation to upgrade to the latest versions of products at no cost for the period of the agreement (3 years).

There is an urgent need to upgrade to the latest version of Microsoft products to enable continued support for operational systems. In addition, the Force needed to migrate to the up to date versions of products to keep in step with other organisations and take advantage of new capabilities.

ORDERED that:-

1. the application for capital funds for a 3 year Enterprise Agreement with Microsoft for the licensing of desktop software be agreed.

USE OF RESOURCES ASSESSMENT

This item was deferred to the next meeting.