OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES

<u>MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 15TH MARCH 2006</u>

Present: Cllr Mrs C Giel (Deputy Chair in the Chair); Mrs A Bradshaw; F Gleaves; F Heathcote; M McVeigh; A Norwood; Mrs C Watson

Apologies were received from Cllrs Mrs Y Clarkson; G Sunderland; M Ashbrook

Also present: Cllr Ms E Woodburn, Leader

Officers: Mrs S Borwick, Head of Finance and Business Development; H Mitchell; Head of Policy and Performance; Ms J Murray, Scrutiny Support Officer; Mrs L Taylor, Democratic Services Officer

Minutes

The minutes of the meetings held on 19th and 31st January 2006 were agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

OSC-PR109   Risk Management Strategy

In the course of a briefing by the Head of Finance and Business Development and subsequent questions the following points were raised:

- The major difference in introducing a risk management strategy was to ensure a change of culture within the organisation and give risk management a much higher profile.

- For Members, this would mean that a better understanding of the risks should lead to more informed decision-making.

RESOLVED: That the strategy should be accompanied by a covering letter which would make clear to both Members and staff why this strategy was being introduced.

- Members could expect to see more robust risk management statements in Executive reports.

RESOLVED: That some worked examples of both strategic and operational risks should be included in the strategy.

- Risks were measured mathematically and, other than a low risk, an action plan is attached to the risk to show how the risk will be minimised. Risks were also embedded in service plans.

- The risk register is held by the Head of Policy and Performance and reassurance was given that it was up-to-date.

RESOLVED: To bring the strategic Risk Register to the October meeting of this Committee.

- Members noted that, with respect to Partnerships, that a protocol was being developed for new partnerships, and the risks associated with existing partnerships would already be assessed. They wondered whether Members should have some input into this.

- Members wondered how it would be ensured that an open and receptive approach to solving risk problems would be adopted by all Members and it was suggested that this was debated at the Corporate Governance Seminar on 27th March 2006.

- It was suggested that with respect to the obligations of managers, employees and Members, that a chart be developed to clarify the roles and responsibilities.

- Members were reassured that the adoption of the risk management strategy should not incur additional staff resources.

OSC-PR110 <u>**Gershon Agenda**</u>

The Head of Policy and Performance presented the latest information with respect to meeting the efficiency savings required by central Government. The Council was required to find £910k over three years.

While some of the savings were yet to be confirmed, it looked likely – as several of the big projects were 'in the bag' – that the Council would meet its target at the end of the three year period, although some of the timings set by the Council itself for each of the three years might slip.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted

That it is considered whether the estimated £30-£35,000 efficiency savings resulting from the introduction of concessionary travel vouchers instead of travel tokens would be an efficiency saving.

OSC-PR111   **Performance Monitoring**

The Porfolio Holder having apologised for absence, the Head of Policy and Performance advised Members as follows:

Q1_01:   It looked likely, although not yet confirmed, that the Auditor's annual audit letter would show improving performance and that this indicator should now be categorised as A/G.

Q2_01:   As reported above, the Gerhson efficiency agenda was on track and that it should now be categorised G/A.

Q2_02:   That a Communications strategy was now at a draft stage.

RESOLVED: That the draft Communications Strategy should be presented to Members of this Committee, with an open invitation to all Members.

OSC-PR112   **Audit Sub Group**

The report back from the Audit Sub Group was received and noted.

OSC-PR113   **IT Sub Group**

The report back from the IT Sub Group was received and noted.

OSC-PR114   **Forward Plan**

The Forward Plan of key decisions to be taken by the Executive was received and noted.

OSC-PR115   **Work Plan**

The work plan of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees was received and noted and the following additions to this Committee's work plan were submitted:

- A review of the major projects fund over the past year.
- A review of the contingencies fund over the past year.
- A review of urgent actions in the past year.

The meeting closed at 3.30pm.

Signed:…………………………………………..
Date:…………………………………………..