

**CORPORATE PERFORMANCE SELECT COMMITTEE REPORT TO
CABINET ON 5 FEBRUARY 2001 –
COMMENTS FROM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- Strategic aims should be supported by clear and measurable outcomes against which performance can be monitored.
- The aims and policies represent a broad agenda and clear priorities will need to be set to be published in the LPP Service Plans and Business Plans
- Many of the efficiency savings are service reductions. Not all of the policy implications may yet have been fully understood.
- Agreement is needed as to the level at which budgets will be held next year. To provide clarity of accountability the Select Committee suggest they should be at portfolio level.
- Urgent consideration is needed to the Council's information communications technology strategy to support and deliver the Council's new business needs.
- HR policies need to address both the short-term recruitment problems and the long-term needs of the Council and its new objectives.
- Additional resources should be allocated to extend the provision of member support and development in the modernised Council
- The policy agenda for adult care services will fundamentally change the role of the County Council. This needs to be redefined and articulated to ensure that users, staff, the public and partners are clear about what it intended and the part they can play in shaping the policy

CABINET RESPONSE

- We agree, and this will be done through portfolio work programmes, service and business plans.
- We agree, and this is already planned.
- The Select Committee has identified two areas of proposed service reduction which conflicted with the strategic aims, and the Leader has agreed that these will not be pursued. The areas were the joint reception arrangements at CDC and the public information service in Wycombe.
- We agree, and this is already planned.
- Again we agree, within the constraints of the budget.
- Some £300,000 has been allocated from the draft revenue budget and a further £200,000 from the capital budget to support such policies.
- This has been done. £25,000 has been identified in the Member Support base budget for 2001-2002 and further allocations can be made from the overall provision for modernisation.
- The Cabinet Member for Care Services for Adults will be reporting to the Cabinet on 5 March on this issue, which is indeed fundamental.

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- Additional resources for the education service should be accompanied by defined outcomes and measurable targets so that performance can be monitored.
 - The targeting of additional resources should be based on well understood criteria which reward good performance.
 - Further consideration is needed as to whether the efficiency saving of £900,000 in the education service, largely from vacancies, is based on assumptions which can be delivered.
 - Further consideration is needed of the long-term implications of Connexions and the Learning and Skills Council so that an assessment on the role of the County can be made.
 - Consultation on the waste strategy should encourage a change of attitude, not simply ask for views and comments.
 - The long-term investment in the highway infrastructure needs to be considered as well as ways to reverse the deterioration of the strategic road network.
 - The County Council should take a lead in making sure public transport is available, regular and affordable and should find ways to engage the public in that dialogue.
 - The County Council needs to understand more clearly the policy implications for the Children's Services Portfolio, especially its resourcing and how the Council should fulfil its corporate parent responsibilities.

CABINET RESPONSE

- The Cabinet agrees and will be seeking the help of the appropriate Select committee in considering how this complex issue can most effectively be addressed.
- As above
- The deliverability of the savings has been confirmed by senior managers in Education, and will be monitored throughout the year to ensure service levels are not diminished.
- We agree. These are major initiatives which the Cabinet will be considering carefully.
- The Cabinet has noted, and is sympathetic to, the Select Committee's view.
- The Cabinet agrees, and anticipates that some of the Local Transport Plan funding will give a boost to tackle some of the immediate problems, though the task is indeed long-term.
- These aims are built into the Local Transport Plan and the public are being engaged, eg via the Aylesbury Transport Users Group.
- The resources available to the portfolio area will be used as effectively as possible to fulfil statutory obligations and important corporate parent responsibilities. More work needs to be done on understanding the spending pressures and the reasons for the trend in growth.

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- The Council also needs to understand and address the risks and policy implications arising from the current staffing difficulties in service departments, but in Children's Services in particular.
- The Council should support the initiative of the Leader in raising the debate on the underfunding of social services.
- The move to joint assessment for Children's Services needs to take account of the strong link to the statementing process for children with special educational needs.
- Investment is needed in children's information systems required to achieve service integration and improved efficiency.

CABINET RESPONSE

- Further resources have been allocated within the draft revenue budget for recruitment and retention to assist with the current difficulties.
- The Government is currently being lobbied, and a meeting with the Minister is being arranged.
- The Cabinet agrees and there has been an improvement in the assessment process.
- There has been such investment, eg via the multi-agency Rapid Referral Service and the Education of Children in Public Care Service.

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