

5 : CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

A LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Introduction

- 1 This is first series of reports for the newly elected council which enable cabinet members to give details about some of the major issues and events that have affected their portfolio areas. The reports also look forward to give a flavour of what is on the horizon locally and regionally.
- 2 The principle is to allow Cabinet Members to draw attention to issues in which the council as a whole may be interested. Members may wish to ask questions or seek further information on any of the areas highlighted in these reports.

South East Leaders

- 3 Following the elections, meetings of the south east leaders resume again on 18 July with a major away day in Surrey. On the agenda are some the major issues facing County Councils in the south east including Area Cost Adjustment, the Social Care agenda, regionalism and improving public services.

Local Government Association

- 4 The LGA conference, which took place in Harrogate between 3 – 6 July saw the adoption of six key pledges which will form the cornerstones of the Association's work over the coming year. The six areas include supporting children and their families, supporting schools, increasing employment opportunities and skills training, helping older people to live independent lives, delivering better bus services and finally transforming local environments.
- 5 At the general assembly meeting itself, I led a debate following a notice of motion that we had previously submitted calling on the LGA to press the government to allocate more resources for Social Care, in the same way as they have for Education and the NHS. I am pleased to say the motion was unanimously accepted and will form part of the Association's work for the coming year.

Regional Issues

- 6 The South East England Regional Assembly met in Woking on 11 July and re-elected me as Chairman of the Assembly for a further year.

Public Service Agreement

- 7 I am pleased to report that we have responded to an invitation from the LGA expressing our wish to enter into discussions with central government departments, from 7 January 2002, with a view to agreeing a local Public Service Agreement.
- 8 The Strategic Manager for Children and Young People will lead this work which, if successful, will result in the County Council, in partnership with our District Council colleagues, Thames Valley Police, and the Health agencies agreeing with central government that, in return for additional funding, freedoms and flexibilities, a higher achievement will be secured in twelve areas of service over the next three years.
- 9 Officers are meeting with colleagues to explore where the greatest opportunities lie. This is a grand opportunity for the County Council to take the lead in developing improved service delivery to the community, and securing enhanced funding for services, through working successfully with others to the benefit of all.

Service and Budget Planning

- 10 Initial work is beginning on developing the policy steers and indicative budget allocations for 2002/03. The work completed so far will be the subject of a report to the Cabinet at its meeting on 30 July.

**DAVID SHAKESPEARE
LEADER**