

# BRECON BEACONS NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY

Telephone: (01874) 624437

Plas y Ffynnon  
Cambrian Way  
Brecon  
Powys  
LD3 7HP

Dear Member

A meeting of the **CORPORATE RESOURCES COMMITTEE** will be held in **THE MAIN CONFERENCE ROOM, PLAS Y FFYNNON, BRECON** on **6<sup>th</sup> MAY 2005** at **10.00AM** when your attendance is requested.

Yours sincerely

CHRISTOPHER GLEDHILL  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Cllr P Ashton  
Cllr Mrs M Morris  
Cllr E T Morgan  
Cllr K Pathak  
Cllr Mrs K Silk  
Cllr Mrs M Tunnicliffe  
Cllr A Breeze (Chairman)

Cllr A Carrington  
Cllr H Morgan  
Cllr E Williams  
Mrs J Charlton (Deputy Chairman)  
Mrs M Taylor  
Mr J Suter  
Mr M Thomas, MBE

## ***Fire Evacuation Advice***

***In the event of a fire, please exit the building via the main staircase,  
and assemble in the car park at Assembly Point 3***

## **AGENDA**

### **1.0 CORRESPONDENCE**

To receive and consider the attached schedule of correspondence and make any recommendations thereon. (Below).

## 2.0 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

To receive any declarations of interest from members relating to items on the agenda. ***Members' attention is drawn to the sheet attached to the attendance sheet and the need to record their declarations.***

## 3.0 MINUTES

To receive and adopt the minutes of the Corporate Resources Committee meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> January 2005, and authorise the Chairman to sign them as a true record. (**Enclosure 1**).

## 4.0 PUBLIC SPEAKING

To give opportunity for members of the public to address the Committee in accordance with the Authority's Public Speaking Scheme.

# FINANCIAL ITEMS

## 5.0 STRATEGIC GRANT LETTER

***Christopher Gledhill***

Members' attention is drawn to the attached Strategic Grant Letter (**Enclosure 2**). The Assembly believe that the targets generally all involve moving forward key elements of the National Park Authority review. They link well with our newly approved corporate and improvement objectives. While we await details of what the Welsh Assembly Government require in terms of annual report, this is the subject of on going discussion. This letter should be read along with our corporate and improvement objectives and our Future Directions document as there is a need to integrate these into our business planning.

***Recommendation: Members are asked to note the targets in the letter.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Christopher Gledhill on 01874 624437.**

## 6.0 DRAFT BUDGET OUTTURN REPORT 2004/2005

*Audrey M Oakley*

### 6.1 Capital Budget

The draft capital outturn is attached for information at **Enclosure 3**. The net capital budget is fully funded from revenue and the small overall underspend of £247 will contribute towards the revenue underspend, covered in a separate report. There is an underspend of £2,715 on the new installation at the Llandovery Information Centre and the Visitor Services Manager has requested that this be carried forward to complete the project.

### 6.2 Revenue Budget

The draft revenue outturn is attached for information at **Enclosure 4**. Members will recall at the last Corporate Resources Committee that the Authority appeared to be heading for an underspend of approximately £77,000 and a list of projects to be implemented to spend this underspend was agreed. However, following the agreement to implement the restructure a moratorium on uncommitted expenditure and recruitment was put in place in order to fund the costs of the implementation.

The draft outturn report therefore shows an underspend of £418,000. Of this underspend £234,650 of projects (as shown below) which have been committed to but have not been concluded before 31<sup>st</sup> March. Members are requested to approve the carry forward to 2005/06:

£60,000	Planning Improvements
£26,000	WAN Connections
£49,500	UDP
£15,000	Training
£14,360	National Park Management Plan
£46,039	Area Action Plans
£2,715	Llandovery Information Centre
£2,000	Furniture
£6,500	Design Guide
£4,000	Sustainable Tourism
£1,536	Building Conservation
<u>£7,000</u>	Asset Management
<u>£234,650</u>	

£115,000 of underspend related to the costs of Plas y Ffynnon, though invoices have still not been received for the period December 2002 to

October 2003. However, invoices from October 2003 to December 2004 were received in February 2005 which has given us some real figures to work on and therefore the estimates in 2005/06 can be reduced.

The Cylch Byw grant of £25,000 was not required, plus the Authority also made an extra £15,000 of interest. Also £10,000 for State of the Park indicators was not spent.

This underspend has allowed the Authority to meet the shortfall budget for 2005/06 and 2006/07 and this will be discussed in further detail through the Chief Executive's paper on restructuring.

The final written report will come to the next meeting of Corporate Resources.

- a) ***Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: £418,000 of underspend has allowed for the implementation of the restructuring and the shortfall in the 2005/06 and 2006/07 budget.***
- b) ***Equality Issues: Equality issues have been addressed in the implementation of the restructuring and the budgetary provision.***
- c) ***Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.***
- d) ***Human Rights: No implications.***
- e) ***Background Papers: None***

***Recommendations: That Members note the above report and agree the carry over projects to 2005/06.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.**

## **7.0 BUDGET ESTIMATES 2005/2006**

***Audrey M Oakley***

As we have only completed one full month's expenditure in 2005/06 we have concentrated in updating the estimates for 2005/06 following the restructuring decisions. The new revenue and capital budgets for 2005/06, and major changes, are shown at **Enclosure 5**.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: Reserves will be reduced to £293,000 which is £23,000 above what the Section 151 Officer recommended.**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None**

**Recommendation:** That Members approve the amended 2005/06 budget.

**Contact Officer:** For further information contact Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.

## 8.0 STATEMENT ON RESERVES

*Audrey M Oakley*

A Statement of Reserves and Provisions as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2005 is shown at **Enclosure 6** for Members' attention.

Essentially the Authority expected to commit £368,000 from reserves for 2004/05, but due to the underspend we now estimate to contribute £52,992 back into reserves. However, in order to fund the carryovers, restructuring costs etc £453,000 will be required from reserves in 2005/06 leaving reserves at £293,000 at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2006. This is approximately £23,000 above what the Section 151 Officer has recommended.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: As outlined in the report**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None**

**Recommendation:** Members are asked to note the Reserves and Provisions Statement as at Enclosure 6.

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Elaine Standen or Alan Elliott on 01874 624437.**

## **9.0 PRUDENTIAL CODE INDICATORS**

***Audrey M Oakley***

The Authority is required to report on the Prudential code indicators each quarter. The monitoring report for the last quarter in 2004/05 is attached at **Enclosure 7**.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: No implications.**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None.**

***Recommendation: Members are asked to note and approve the contents of the report.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Elaine Standen or Alan Elliott on 01874 624437.**

## **10.0 RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

***Alan Elliott***

The Authority is required to disclose material transactions with related parties i.e. bodies or individuals that have the potential to control or influence the Authority or to be controlled or influenced by the Authority.

Disclosure of these transactions, if any, is made in the annual Statement of Accounts and allows readers to assess the extent to which the Authority might have been constrained in its ability to operate independently or might have secured the ability to limit another party's ability to bargain freely with the Authority.

The Audit Commission have recommended that the Authority should agree a materiality level for the disclosure of any transactions and suggest that the level should be £5,000.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement Implications: No implications.**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: Audit Commission Final Accounts Audit 2003/2004.**

***Recommendation: That the Authority agrees the materiality level for disclosure of Related Party Transactions at £5,000.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Elaine Standen or Alan Elliott on 01874 624437.**

## **11.0 TRADING REPORT APRIL 2004 TO APRIL 2005**

***Ruth Nicholson***

Trading figures for the period April 2004 to March 2005 are attached at **Enclosure 8.**

### **11.1 National Park Visitor Centre**

In 2004/5, overall net expenditure was reduced by £2979. Income was encouraging in all areas including tea room and shop sales. Tea room sales increased by £24320 partly due to increased prices, and publications sales increased by £1603 compared to the previous financial year.

However, increased expenditure did occur in a number of areas. The tea rooms increased spending on budgeted figures by £10,000 which included increased labour and food provision costs to take account of higher sales. The centre also had to pay over £2000 in advertising costs for cleaning staff and twice for fixed term warden contracts. Increased repairs and maintenance also meant higher expenditure and money had to be allocated for grounds maintenance. Finally, due to difficulties in recruiting a cleaner there was an increased cost for contractors to cover this absence.

Car park income was significantly down despite encouragement to more people to pay the restructured car park charges. Analysis of tickets purchased is being carried out on the reason for this but it appears that

more people opted for lower priced tickets. Whilst the lower short stay tickets were popular with visitors wanting to visit the tea rooms, this has meant an overall reduction in income generated. The main option under consideration is to remove lower ticket prices and provide voucher incentives for those who purchase higher priced options to visit the tea rooms.

Education income is now shown in the education budget.

Overall the centre has shown a healthy increase in visitor numbers which were up by 11,233. The weather affected the distribution of visitors throughout the year and numbers were partly boosted by an early Easter.

## **11.2 Craig-y-nos Country Park**

The financial figures for Criag-y-nos Country Park contain Adfwyio funding that was actually spent on displays and a shop refurbishment in the previous year. Therefore, the figures suggest a much lower cost to the Authority for this financial year compared with 2003/4. However, overall there has been a small decrease in net expenditure.

The Canine Capers event was a large expenditure for the Country Park in the previous financial year. Despite attracting a good audience to the event, it was not able to generate enough to cover costs. In addition, the centre had to pay higher insurance costs than were initially budgeted for. In other areas expenditure was comparable with the previous year.

Car park income remained steady compared with last year and the centre achieved an increase in what was budgeted for. The new shop refurbishment has meant improved display of goods and encouragingly sales of souvenirs tripled from £1371 to £4095.

Again, education income is now shown in the education budget.

Visitor numbers have shown a healthy increase, partly again due to an early Easter, and the distribution is effected by the weather.

## **11.3 Information Centres**

Income at the NPA's information centres has increased through good publication and souvenir sales.

There has been an increased expenditure compared to last year at the NPA's Information Centres. This was partly due to two staff illnesses,



one long term. Both travel costs and extra cover had to be provided for this. Both members are staff are now well and back at work.

Due to increased income, it was decided to keep Abergavenny running over the winter period. This was popular with visitors to the centre and did allow the NPA to maintain its information provision year round.

Overall this has resulted in a small increase of 1.5% in the net expenditure of running the centres compared to budgeted figures.

With increased opening of Abergavenny visitor numbers have increased, with an overall increase across the three of 38%.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: The Centres have generated increased income and this has allowed Abergavenny Information Centre to stay open longer bringing an improved service for visitors.**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: Increased visitor numbers at the Centres, especially at the National Park Visitor Centre, has increased the pressure on water and electricity supplies.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None.**

***Recommendation: That the contents of the report be considered.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Ruth Nicholson or Alan Elliott on 01874 624437.**

## **12.0 EXTERNAL FUNDING - APRIL 2005**

***Jane Davies***

### **12.1 Modern Apprenticeship Scheme**

Discussions have continued over the implementation of a Modern Apprenticeship Scheme at the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority working in partnership with Coleg Powys. It is anticipated that a student will commence with the Countryside and Estate Team at the beginning of September 2005. At the last meeting between staff of the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority and Coleg Powys the possibility of setting up a consortium of partners who would be able to offer

apprenticeship opportunities was discussed. The benefit of such a consortium would be that instead of being able to offer one apprenticeship per annum several places could be made available to accommodate more students. Approaches have been made to, the Forestry Commission, CCW, Brecknock Wildlife Trust, British Waterways, Welsh Water, Defence Estates and The National Trust. To date responses have been received from both The National Trust and Brecknock Wildlife Trust but neither are in a financial position to be able to offer an apprenticeship.

## **12.2 The Big Lottery Fund**

### **12.2.1 Mentro Allan**

It is likely to be some time before we hear if our project application has been successful (Jan 06) we have submitted a joint project with Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and the Learning Through The Outdoors (LTTO) project. We continue to meet with the Advisory Panel for LTTO and are looking at developing other projects that will benefit both partners.

### **12.2.2 Young People's Fund – Wales – 'Bridging The Gap'**

This is a new project that we are hoping to develop with the YHA, Powys Youth Service and BBNPA, this fund provides support for outreach and support services for the most disengaged and disaffected young people to help them:

- Enjoy life and achieve their potential
- Develop skills and contribute to their communities
- Choose positive activities which discourage anti-social behaviour

In Wales the Young People's Fund will give out grants worth £13.2 million between 2005 and 2009. The programme will focus on young people between 10 and 19 years old. It will have three strands:

- **Make it Happen** – small grants for projects developed and run by young people
- **Bridging the Gap** – as above
- **Reaching Out** – development projects that meet a clear gap in local services for young people

The Young People's fund was launched on 31 January 2005, with Bridging the Gap opening on 14 March 2005 and Reaching Out on 25 April 2005.

## **12.3 The Physical Regeneration Fund – Update**

### **12.3.1 Crickhowell**

Work is almost complete on the Webbs Building under the PRF Scheme. The next project to be launched will be on the Cashell's Building which will include total restoration of the front elevation. Funds will also be allocated on a residential building in Bridge Street to remove unsightly dormers thus enhancing the main tourist route to access the river. Work is also in progress with the lighting engineers from Powys to agree a final phase of traditional street lighting.

### **12.3.2 Brecon**

The property fronting the High Street (formerly 'The Old Bell Inn') including the buildings in Bell Lane has now received listed building Planning Permission and this has generated an application to the PRF for Brecon. Schedules of work have also been prepared for the 'Nicholls' building in High Street with two smaller projects also benefiting from the PRF for Brecon Town (this also includes a new business in Ship Street).

### **12.3.3 Brecon Castle**

Archaeological Consultants are now on site at the Castle to carry out survey work together with structural engineers, we have also appointed local contractors to carry out enabling works (Rourke Davies who have specialist experience of working on ancient monuments and buildings). Funding for this project comes from a Heritage Lottery Fund Project Planning Grant.

## **12.4 Aggregates Levy Sustainable Fund**

An application has been submitted to draw down funds to cover the cost of the Minerals Valuation Services required to complete Phase One of the Prohibition Order Project. This work is being carried out at the request of the Welsh Assembly Government.

## **12.5 Esmee Fairbairn Environmental Fund**

Funds allocated under the original Objective One Cylch Byw project are to be transferred into a new joint Wildlife Sites Project with Gwent Wildlife Trust. We were originally awarded £25,000 to support the Cylch Byw project. The Esmee Fairbairn Trust indicated they were still keen to

support our environmental programme and have agreed to the funds to be utilised for the new Gwent Wildlife Sites Project.

## **12.6 Sponsorship**

An application for sponsorship of a pilot project has been made to Orange Personal Communications Services. The Fforest Fawr Geopark has been looking in to the possibility of providing Audio Tours whereby information is downloaded to your mobile telephone. This would provide a novel way of interpreting our proposed Geo Town Walk for Brecon, as well as piloting the take-up of such a facility which could be rolled out into other areas of interpretation within the National Park thus avoiding the use of intrusive Interpretation Boards in special areas.

75 million telephone and text messages are made/sent each day in the UK alone, this could be an opportunity for the Brecon Beacons National Park to communicate our message and appeal to a much younger age range of residents and visitors bearing in mind that the vast majority of people from 7yrs – 70yrs now own mobile telephones!

## **12.7 Medrwn**

Discussions are ongoing with Medrwn to work with Geopark in developing training courses for activity and accommodation providers within the proposed Fforest Fawr Geopark – Medrwn is a people development programme providing free or highly subsidised training tailored to local tourism needs. At the recent Sustainable Tourism Forum held in the Theatre at Brecon, feedback from the Geopark Workshop indicated a need for specialist training for providers to enable them to feel confident in providing relevant information to visitors drawn into the National Park through the Fforest Fawr Geopark. The result of providing such training will improve the overall quality of the visitor experience.

- a) ***Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: Financial implications remain as set out in the report to the Corporate Resources Committee on 28 January 2005. There are no additional staffing implications and improvements implications are clearly beneficial to staff, residents and visitors.***
- b) ***Equality Issues: No implications.***
- c) ***Sustainability Appraisal: All the above have clear sustainable benefits.***

d) **Human Rights: No implications.**

e) **Background Papers: None**

***Recommendation: That the contents of the report be noted.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Jane Davies on 01874 624437.**

## **13.0 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FUND**

***Helen Roderick/Jonathan Cook***

### **13.1 Grant Awards Update**

Eight grants totaling £65,253 have been awarded since the beginning of 2005.

#### **13.1.1 Cantref Adventure Farm - Renewable Energy, Interpretation & Access**

A grant of £3,700 was awarded towards the cost of installing a solar power demonstration unit for hand-washing. Additionally there will be an expansion of the current facilities for the disabled and interpretation of the nature trail to enhance the education experience of visitors.

#### **13.1.2. Crick 21 - Green Dragon for Small Businesses and Beyond**

A grant of £2,155 was awarded towards the cost of 5 businesses undergoing the process that leads to the attainment of the Green Dragon Award. In return these businesses will be committed to setting up a community award scheme and to providing support and mentoring for those community groups wishing to attain Green Dragon status.

#### **13.1.3 Brecknock Agricultural Society - Farming in Upland Wales in 2020**

A grant of £7,750 has been awarded towards the cost of commissioning the Institute of Welsh Affairs to produce a publication to chart the future of upland farming in Wales to the year 2020. Building on known trends, the aim will be to produce a number of scenarios of how a typical upland hill farm in Wales might look in 15 years time.

#### **13.1.4 The Gaia Partnership - The Gaia Exhibition**

£5,000 was awarded to this project which will stage a 10 day renewables/arts and crafts show culminating in a Schumacher Lecture which will be included in the last day of the Hay Festival. Sustainable

initiatives such as Green Tourism, renewable energy, recycling, local food and sustainable building products and services will form the main Gaia Exhibition to be staged in the Parish Hall.

13.1.5 Brecon Beacons National Park - Sustainable Events Programme 2005/06

£10,000 has been set aside to enable the Sustainable Events Officer to support 10 new events within the National Park, predominantly focused outside the main events season.

13.1.6 Brecknock Farmers' Market - Co-ordinator

A grant of £5,000 over two years has been given to ensure continued support for the Farmers' Market in Brecon.

13.1.7 CPRW - Sustainable Rural Communities in Action

A grant of £31,048 will fund the employment of a project officer for two years based at Brecon Beacons National Park Authority HQ in Brecon. The officer will promote and co-ordinate sustainable transport initiatives, including the development of a sustainable transport directory for the Brecon Beacons National Park to encourage the use of alternative modes of transport to the car within the Park. In addition this person will provide proactive practical support for investigating practical energy schemes and develop a local energy toolkit in partnership with Mid Wales Energy Agency.

13.1.8 Powys Arts Forum - Powys Arts Month May 2005

A grant of £600 has been awarded to compile, market and co-ordinate a programme of arts events and workshops taking place throughout Powys during the month of May 2005.

**13.2 Programme Spend 2003/04**

The SDF financial spreadsheet is attached (**Enclosure 9**). The full allocation of £250,000 was used in 2004/05. The following funds are available for new projects 2005/06

2005/06 - £28,024

Continuation of funding of the SDF programme for a further two years beyond 2005/06 appeared in the Welsh Assembly's provisional budget and on that basis grants are now being allocated.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: No financial or staffing implications as SDF is a stand alone budget.**
- b) **Equality Issues: All SDF projects aim to address social inclusion and equality of opportunity issues.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: All projects have been assessed according to the criteria established for the SDF programme by the Assembly.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None.**

**Recommendation:** To note the contents of the report.

**Contact Officer:** For further information contact Helen Roderick or Jonathan Cook on 01874 624437.

#### **14.0 ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Members are asked to agree the following recommendation in relation to items 15.0 – 20.0 on the agenda.

**Recommendation:** That pursuant to the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that there would be disclosure to them of exempt information under Paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, to the Act.

The following exempt reports are attached at **Enclosure 10**(circulated to members only) for members to consider and make any recommendations therein.

### **EXEMPT ITEMS – FINANCE**

No Items.

## EXEMPT ITEMS - HUMAN RESOURCES

### 15.0 SICKNESS REPORT

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION - This report contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.***

### 16.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION - This report contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.***

### 17.0 PROBATION REPORTS

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION - This report contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.***

### 18.0 STRESS COUNSELLING REPORT

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION - This report contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.***

### 19.0 HONORARIUM

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION - This report contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.***

### 20.0 RESTRUCTURING

***Chris Gledhill***

***NOT FOR PUBLICATION - This report contains exempt information as defined in paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.***



## HUMAN RESOURCES REPORT

### 21.0 STAFFING REPORT

*Audrey M Oakley*

A list of appointments and terminations since the 28<sup>th</sup> January Corporate Resources Committee is attached at **Enclosure 11**.

Also attached is a graph showing the % of turnover for the year 2004/05 at **Enclosure 12**.

***Recommendation: That the contents of the report be considered and noted.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.**

### 22.0 LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

*Audrey M Oakley*

A monthly summary of formal training, which has taken place between February and March 2005 is attached at **Enclosure 13**. Members will note that a lot of IT training on the new systems has been taking place.

***Recommendation: That the contents of the report be considered and noted.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.**

### 23.0 HUMAN RESOURCES POLICIES

*Audrey Oakley*

A number of Human Resources policies have been updated, reviewed and put into the new format to be added to the new Human Resources Manual which went live in December 2004.

Members are asked to consider and approve the following policies which are attached at **Enclosure 14**.

All the policies have been through a full consultation process with the Corporate Management team and the Union.

The policies for consideration and approval are:-

1.14 Work Options (Work/Life Balance).

4.1 Holidays.

4.3 Hours of Work.

4.15 Paternity Leave.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: No implications.**
- b) **Equality Issues: These Human Resources policies should improve equality for all staff and encourage recruitment and retainment of staff.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: All Human Resources policies comply with the Human Rights Act.**
- e) **Background Papers: None**

***Recommendation: Members are requested to consider and approve the attached Human Resource policies.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.**

## **24.0 LIST OF POLITICALLY RESTRICTED POSTS *Lynn Coughlan***

The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 imposes restrictions on the political activities of certain local government staff by providing that those staff who hold politically restricted posts are prevented from standing for election or otherwise becoming a member of a local authority, a Member of Parliament, a Member of the National Assembly for Wales or a Member of the European Parliament. Such postholders must also not act as election agents, be an officer etc. of a political party involved in general management of the party or branch or canvass on behalf of a political party or candidate. They are also prevented from speaking to the public with the apparent intention of affecting support for a political party and publishing any work intended to affect public support for a political party.

There are three categories of politically restricted posts. These are:-

A. Those posts specified in the Act

- B. Posts where the annual remuneration exceeds a certain amount, currently spinal column point 44 of the NJC pay rates
- C. Sensitive posts i.e. those posts whose duty involves giving advice on a regular basis to the Authority, a committee or sub-committee or speaking on behalf of the Authority on a regular basis to journalists or broadcasters.

The Authority is obliged to prepare and maintain a list of such posts. Having regard to the current staff structure it would appear that the following are the politically restricted posts within each category

### **Specified posts**

Chief Executive  
Monitoring Officer  
Section 151 Officer

### **Posts where the annual remuneration exceeds scp44**

Head of Corporate Services/Deputy Chief Executive  
External Funding Officer  
Head of Countryside  
Head of Conservation and Community

### **Sensitive posts**

Development Control Manager  
Planning Advisers  
Enforcement Officer  
Visitor Services Manager  
Strategy and Policy Manager  
Communications Officer  
Communications Assistant  
Rights of Way Officer  
Access Officer  
Listed Building Officer  
Human Resources Manager  
Solicitor

It should be noted that it is possible to apply to an Independent Adjudicator for exemption from political restriction.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: No implications.**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None**

**RECOMMENDATION: That the Committee approves the above list of politically restricted posts**

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey Oakley or Lynne Coughlan on 01874 624437.**

## **IMPROVEMENT ITEMS**

### **25.0 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REVIEW FOR YEAR END 2005/2006 Wayne Evans**

The Performance Management Group met in April to review progress on the strategic and detailed work targets for 2004/2005 alongside performance indicators.

The Key Work Targets that have been highlighted previously are updated below:

- Access to online financial information

The system has been rolled out to the Corporate Management Team for evaluation; however training is required by senior managers so they may fully assess the systems usefulness for their respective departments.

- Adoption of Crime and Disorder Policy

Presented to Authority meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> April for adoption.

- Plan and implement a project based methodology

CEO and Senior Managers have discussed the appointment of a champion to facilitate the introduction of this approach; however this is pending completion of restructuring.

- Implementation of Business Continuity Planning

This has not been completed and will be carried forward to 2005/06

- Replace or review outdated and poorly supported planning system. Allow full use of new digitizing system via document management.

Funding has been approved by the Authority and tenders for the supply of the new system closed on the 29<sup>th</sup> April.

Those Performance indicators that have remained below target are as follows:

- Percentage of applications determined within 8 weeks

Increases in applications and staff resource issues have hindered progress however; increased delegation and the determination of outstanding applications should see the NPA's anticipated target of 60% for March 2006 being met.

- average number of planning applications assigned to a Planning Advisor at any one time.

The average for the year allowing for fluctuating officer numbers remain well in excess of the recommended 35 and is calculated at 87.

- number of working days/shifts per Full Time Equivalent lost due to sickness absence

This stands at 6% against a target of 3% however; ongoing long-term sickness amongst up to four officers over the year has skewed the data to some extent. Self certification sickness has also been above expected levels, particularly during October to February.

- percentage of letters replied to or acknowledged within 5 working days of receipt.

This remains below target at 54%. An issue of use of the database training in the removal of letters from the log once dealt with has been identified. Failure to remove complaints may be contributing to

apparent shortfall. Reception staff will coach relevant staff and monitor use of the database.

- percentage of letters that receive a full written response within 20 working days

This now stands at 97% and may show further improvement following training as identified above.

92 complaints have been received since April 2004 and 62 complaints answered fully.

57.04% answered fully April 2004 – March 2005.

The rest are still outstanding.

- Location of housing development in relation to settlement hierarchy % of units permitted in Countryside

This is well in excess of the 5% target mostly through the granting of consent for development of redundant agricultural buildings. It is recommended that this PI be split between new build and conversions as barn conversions will otherwise continue to give a misleading view.

- a) **Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: No implications at this stage.**
- b) **Equality Issues: No implications.**
- c) **Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.**
- d) **Human Rights: No implications.**
- e) **Background Papers: None.**

***Recommendation: That the report on performance for the period April-November 2004 be considered.***

***Contact Officer: For further information contact Wayne Evans on 01874 624036 or Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.***

## 26.0 WHOLE AUTHORITY ANALYSIS ACTION PLAN 2005-2006

*Audrey M Oakley*

The Whole Authority Analysis (WAA) Action Plan for 2005-2006 has been considered and updated by the Whole Authority Analysis Action Plan Task and Finish Group which met on 7th April 2005, and is now attached at **Enclosure 15**.

It has now been brought before Members of the Corporate Resources Committee for approval. Once approved work will begin on implementation and the WAA Action Plan will be inserted into the 2005-2008 Corporate Improvement Plan.

- a) ***Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications: The Action Plan outlines action for improvement, some of which may staffing or financial implications.***
- b) ***Equality Issues: No implications***
- c) ***Sustainability Appraisal: No implications***
- d) ***Human Rights: No implications***
- e) ***Background Papers:***

***Recommendation Members to consider and approve the new WAA Action Plan for 2005-2006.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey M Oakley on 01874 624437.**

## 27.0 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2005/2008

*Audrey M Oakley*

The Corporate Improvement Plan for 2005-2008 will be a much more stream-lined, strategic document. Now that the transition is over between the old format and the new Future Directions an outline plan has been approved by the Audit Commission which will reduce the plan by about 50 pages.

The Authority adopted the strategic corporate objectives for 2005-2008 at the 21st January 2005 Strategy and Policy committee subject to some final minor alterations. These have now been completed and circulated to all staff (**Enclosure 16**). The strategic objectives will now be inserted into the Corporate Improvement Plan for 2005-2008.

Staff have completed the detailed work targets for 2005-2006 (**Enclosure 17**) to support the objectives and these will be inserted into the performance monitoring database.

All performance indicators have been reviewed along with the targets for 2005-2006 (**Enclosure 18**) and these will also be inserted into the Corporate Improvement Plan subject to Members' approval.

***NB. Some information on the work targets and performance indicators was not available at the time of printing. This information will be tabled at the meeting for members' consideration.***

- a) ***Financial, Staffing and Improvement implications:***
- b) ***Equality Issues: No implications.***
- c) ***Sustainability Appraisal: No implications.***
- d) ***Human Rights: No implications.***
- e) ***Background Papers: None.***

***Recommendation: That Members approve the Performance Indicators and targets for 2005-2008.***

**Contact Officer: For further information contact Audrey Oakley on 01874 624437.**

## **28.0 OTHER BUSINESS**

Such other business as is, in the opinion of the Chairman of such urgency as to warrant consideration.

### **SCHEDULE OF CORRESPONDENCE**

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Such other correspondence as, in the opinion of the Chairman, is of such urgency as to warrant consideration.