

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF CABINET MEETING ON 6TH JUNE 2005

CO32. ISSUES FOR SOUTH KESTEVEN DC ARISING OUT OF A REVIEW OF THE CORPORATE GOVERNANCE REPORT ON LINCOLNSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

DECISION:

That the Cabinet approve:

- (1) That all groups make a clear statement of support and commitment of partnership working through the LSP;**
- (2) The Chairs or Vice-Chairmanships of DSPs be appointed according to the suitability and merit of members regardless of political allegiance;**
- (3) That the Chairman of the Standards Committee be invited to report to the Council on the extent to which he feels that the members of the authority understand and support the role of the Standards Committee and any proposals he may have for improving the work of the Standards Committee;**
- (4) That the Corporate Manager of Human Resources undertakes a review of the resources required to support a more comprehensive member training and development programme at South Kesteven using external expertise where appropriate;**
- (5) That the Constitution and Accounts Committee design an amendment to the Constitution so that with effect from the 1st May 2007, the desirable and essential competencies required of both Cabinet and DSP members are defined with all members being required to attend designated sessions for the essential competencies within twelve months of their appointment;**
- (6) That in the autumn of this year, staff of South Kesteven are asked to complete the survey used by the Audit Commission to inform the Corporate Governance report so that results can be compared;**
- (7) That the Council re-affirms its commitment to the concept of Local Area Assemblies and pledges to work with local people to make these meetings effective forums for wider community engagement;**
- (8) That under our priority for vulnerable people, the Director of Community Services prepares a strategy for Social Inclusion by December 2005;**
- (9) That those members who may have concerns about the current system, or a preference for the Committee system consider how they will be able to demonstrate to an external assessor that these views have not deterred them from playing a full and active part in the Council's decision making and scrutiny processes as set out in the Constitution;**
- (10) That the Corporate Manager Human Resources investigates the level of compliance with the Council's policies regarding staff appraisals and the effectiveness of the appraisals that have been undertaken.**

Considerations/Reasons for Decision

- (1) Report number CEX288 by the Chief Executive which identifies lessons from Lincolnshire County Council's Corporate Governance Inspection by the Audit Commission and makes recommendations for improvement to help the Council progress from a 'fair' towards an 'excellent' Council;**
- (2) Representations received from the Resources DSP;**
- (3) The environment in which both the County Council and the District Council operates is similar;**
- (4) Fulfillment of a Category B Priority, improving the LSP and the Community Strategy. To improve knowledge, understanding and involvement between the LSP and Council members;**
- (5) The Standards Committee, as the regulatory body, is viewed by the public as a means to hold elected members to account, demonstrating the Council's commitment to improve.**

- (6) Member development at Lincolnshire County Council was described as “limited” yet is more comprehensive than that being applied by SKDC, where member development is viewed reluctantly by some Councillors;
- (7) Completion by staff of questionnaires on the perception of working relationships between members and members of the management team would prevent fragmentation and would supplement the results of the 360 degree appraisals being undertaken by members of the Executive.
- (8) The introduction of Local Area Assemblies and the Annual Stakeholders Conference has demonstrated that South Kesteven is willing to contemplate new forms of public consultation, countermanding any perceptions of parochialism.
- (9) The District Council does not have a strategy for social inclusion. Despite outreach to vulnerable people being included as a Category B Priority, preventing successful outreach to all individuals within South Kesteven.
- (10) The CPA Governance report states that the speed of improvement is not sufficient to match that achieved by other authorities and from a relative standing, the District Council may be slipping backwards. The recent Strategic Housing Report makes similar demonstrations.