

Corporate Management Committee

Thursday 7 January 2010 7.30pm

**Council Chamber
Runnymede Civic Centre, Addlestone**

Members of the Committee

Councillors J R Furey (Chairman), D R Hamilton (Vice-Chairman), A Alderson, M J Brown, Mrs L M Gillham, H W V Meares, P I Roberts, P Taylor, P J Waddell and G B Woodger

AGENDA

Notes:

- 1) Any report on the Agenda involving confidential information (as defined by section 100A(3) of the Local Government Act 1972) must be discussed in private. Any report involving exempt information (as defined by section 100I of the Local Government Act 1972), whether it appears in Part 1 or Part 2 below, may be discussed in private but only if the Committee so resolves.
- 2) The relevant 'background papers' are listed after each report in Part 1. Enquiries about any of the Agenda reports and background papers should be directed in the first instance to **Mr J Gurmin, Administration and Leisure Department, Committee Section, Runnymede Civic Centre, Station Road, Addlestone (Tel: Direct Line: 01932 425624). (Email: john.gurmin@runnymede.gov.uk).**
- 3) Agendas and Minutes are available on a subscription basis. For details, please ring Mr B A Fleckney on 01932 425620. Agendas and Minutes for all the Council's Committees may also be viewed on www.runnymede.gov.uk.
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LIST OF MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION **PART I**

Matters in respect of which reports have been made available for public inspection

	<u>Page</u>
1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS	4
2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP	4
3. MINUTES	4
4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE	4
5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	4
6. USE OF RESOURCES REPORT 2008/09 AND ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT 2008/09	4
7. LOCAL AUTHORITY FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2010/11	4
8. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2010/11	7
9. FRONT OF HOUSE CUSTOMER SERVICES – REVIEW OF THIRD STAGE OF PILOT	8
10. LOCAL DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION ACT 2009	11
11. INDEPENDENT SAFEGUARDING AUTHORITY – VETTING AND BARRING SCHEME	16
12. PURCHASE OF PLANT FOR THE DEPOT	19
13. OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT UNDER THE ELECTRONIC LICENSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	20
14. URGENT ACTION – STANDING ORDER 42	23
15. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC	23

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection.

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

1. FIRE PRECAUTIONS

The Chairman will read the Fire Precautions which set out the procedures to be followed in the event of fire or other emergency.

2. NOTIFICATION OF CHANGES TO COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

3. MINUTES

To confirm and sign the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 26 November 2009 (attached at Appendix 'A') (to follow).

4. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

If Members have an interest in an item please record the interest on the form circulated with this Agenda and hand it to the Legal Representative or Committee Administrator at the start of the meeting. A supply of the form will also be available from the Committee Administrator at meetings.

Members who have previously declared interests which are recorded in the Minutes to be considered at this meeting need not repeat the declaration when attending the meeting. Members need take no further action unless the item in which they have an interest becomes the subject of debate, in which event the Member must leave the room if the interest is personal and prejudicial.

6. USE OF RESOURCES REPORT 2008/09 AND ORGANISATIONAL ASSESSMENT 2008/09 (DF)

The Use of Resources Report for 2008/09, (at Appendix 'B') (circulated separately) has been submitted by KPMG for consideration by the Council. It deals with the auditor's assessment of the Council against the three themes of Managing Finances, Governing the Business and Managing Resources. Mr Neil Thomas, a Partner at KPMG, will be present to introduce the report and answer questions from Members of the Committee.

In addition, Mr Paul Chambers, who is the Council's Relationship Manager at the Audit Commission, will be attending to present the Commission's Organisational Assessment for 2008/09 (at Appendix 'C') and answer questions from Members of the Committee.

7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT FINANCE SETTLEMENT 2010/11 (DF)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **The purpose of this report is to inform Members of the details of the 2010/11 Local Government Finance Settlement.**

2. Background Information

2.1 The Government announced the Local Government Finance Settlement on 26 November 2009. This set out the basis on which Revenue Support Grant and Business Rates will be distributed to Councils in 2010/11. These figures are still provisional and are subject to consultation. The final statutory reports will be laid before Parliament towards the end of January.

2.2 A simple guide to the Settlement is published on the web site of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) at www.local.communities.gov.uk/finance/1011/simpguid.pdf.

2.3 The financial settlement for 2010/11 is the third year of the three year settlement originally published by the Government in December 2007. The recent announcement honours the commitments made in the original statement. The total paid in formula grant to English local authorities in 2010/11 will be £29 billion, an increase of 2.6% over the comparable figure of £28.25 billion in 2009/10.

3. Report

3.1 Formula Grant is based on a complex calculation that applies weightings to data (for example population, deprivation, population sparsity and density) to determine each Council's share of the national cash sum that the Government has provided in the settlement. This is explained in the Government's simple guide.

Formula Grant

3.2 **Formula Grant** is the name for the cash that the Council will receive from the Government. The following table shows the draft settlement figures for 2010/11 compared with 2009/10.

2009/10 £		2010/11 £
2,701,200	• Relative Needs , assessed by ascribing values to a range of indices (mainly demographic)	2,736,300
-2,828,400	• A deduction for Relative Resources , calculated by assessing the authority's taxbase in relation to its population	-2,750,900
5,758,900	• A Central Allocation , paid on a population based formula	5,787,000
-149,600	• Floor Damping , providing protection to those authorities whose entitlement would otherwise fall below the 2.7% increase announced by the Government (and paid for by reducing the entitlement of authorities whose increase is more than 2.7%)	-152,100
£5,482,100	Formula Grant	£5,620,300

3.3 The overall amount will be paid partly in the form of redistributed Business Rates (£4.9 million in 2010/11) and partly in Revenue Support Grant (£712,700).

3.4 In order to pay Formula Grant that is identical to the three year settlement figures, the Government has retained the methodology and resource equalisation used in the original calculations.

Floor Damping

3.5 The settlement provides grant protection so that no authority will receive less than the minimum increase announced by the Minister. For districts the floor increase is 0.5%. The cost of paying for floor damping is met by scaling back the amount of grant paid to those authorities whose increase is more than the floor.

3.6 Runnymede's Formula Grant of £5,620,300 for 2010/11 will be 2.5% more than it is receiving in 2009/10. Since its increase is above the floor, it means that Runnymede is one of the authorities whose grant is reduced to pay for floor protection elsewhere. As can be seen from Table 1, this negative adjustment will amount to £152,100 in 2009/10. Without this reduction, Runnymede would receive an increase of 5.3% rather than the 2.5% that has been announced.

Capping

3.7 As in previous years, the ministerial statement makes it clear that the Government intends to cap Council Tax increases that it regards as excessive. The Parliamentary Under Secretary of State's written statement includes the following comment, "I am pleased that the average B and D council tax increase this year was 3.0% - the Government expects to see it fall further next year while authorities protect and improve front line services. We expect the average Band D council tax increase in England to fall to a 16 year low in 2010-11. We remain prepared to take capping action against excessive increases set by individual authorities and requiring them to rebill for a lower council tax if necessary." The full statement is reproduced at Appendix 'D'. The Minister subsequently wrote to all Council Leaders on 9 December 2009 reiterating the Government's determination to prevent excessive tax increases and this letter is reproduced at Appendix 'E'.

Specific Grants

- 3.8 The Government has also released information about the specific grants that will be distributed to local authorities next year. The national control totals reveal the continued withdrawal of support for benefit administration, an increase in the amount allocated to housing and planning delivery grant and the transfer of supporting people grant to the amount distributed via area based grant.
- 3.9 Unfortunately, at the time of writing this report, information was still awaited on the distribution of benefit subsidy administration grant, concessionary fares grant and housing and planning delivery grant. Runnymede's share of the grants that have been notified is:-

	2009/10	2010/11
	£m	£m
Homelessness	71,000	40,000
Area Based Grant	22,811	28,819

- 3.10 At the last meeting of the Committee it was reported that the Government intended to reduce the Council's entitlement to concessionary fares grant by £70,000 next year and Officers were instructed to make representations against this proposal. The outcome of the Government's consultation has not yet been announced.

4. Resource Implications

- 4.1 Runnymede's Formula Grant announced in the provisional settlement is identical to the amount included in the Financial Forecast reported to this Committee on 30 October 2009. There are consequently no additional budgetary implications to those already reported.
- 4.2 The ministerial statement makes reference to the 39% increase in government funding for local government in the ten years up to 2007/08. While this is true for the country as a whole, for Runnymede the level of Government funding did not increase over this period. After adjusting for transfers to or from specific grants and for inflation, the amount that Runnymede will receive in formula grant in 2010/11 will represent a reduction of 19% compared with 1997/98 and a reduction of 30% if the comparison is made with 1995/96 as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Formula Grant compared with 1995/96 and 1997/98

	Formula Grant (Cash received)	Grant adjusted to 1995/96 basis	1995/96 adjusted for inflation	1997/98 adjusted for inflation
	£	£	£	£
1995/96	5,733,571	5,733,571	5,733,571	
1997/98	5,230,839	5,230,839		5,230,839
2007/08	5,217,200	5,526,300	7,869,915	6,789,250
2008/09	5,365,316	5,674,416	8,235,136	7,104,320
2009/10	5,482,100	5,791,200	8,482,543	7,317,754
2010/11	5,620,261	5,929,361	8,482,543	7,317,754

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 Runnymede's Formula Grant in 2010/11 will increase by 2.5% over the 2009/10 figure.
- 5.2 Runnymede's Formula Grant has been reduced to pay for the cost of floor protection awarded to other Councils.
- 5.3 The Government have made it clear that they will continue to use their capping powers to prevent what they regard as excessive increases.
- 5.4 The latest figures available are still provisional. The final grant settlement figures approved by Parliament will be reported to this Committee on 4 February 2010 when the overall budget for 2010/11 will be considered.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Local Government Finance Settlement papers received from DCLG.

8. REVENUE ESTIMATES 2010/11 (DF)

1. Members are asked to consider the Revenue Estimates for 2010/11.
2. A budget is the expression in financial terms of the Council's policies over the next year and is a statement of intention against which achievement can be compared. The main objectives of budgeting are:
 - Satisfaction of statutory requirements
 - Determining the amount which needs to be raised from Council Tax or rents
 - Assisting in the planning and policy making process
 - Policy implementation and control
 - A means of measurement, and
 - Strategic planning
3. The report of the Director of Finance containing the Revenue Estimates and fees and charges for the services under the remit of this Committee is attached at Appendix 'F'. (The Estimates have been circulated separately to members of the Committee and relevant Officers only and a copy has been placed on the website for all other Members and the public).
4. The estimates are separated into the following sections:
 - i) Corporate Management Committee Estimates (Appendix 'F' - pages 1-72)
 - ii) Current and proposed fees and charges (Appendix 'F' – pages 73-74)
 - iii) Assumptions used in setting the budgets for 2010/11 (Appendix 'F' - pages 75-80)
 - iv) An Equalities Impact Assessment on the budget setting process (Appendix 'F' - pages 81-83)

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the Revenue Estimates for 2010/11 be approved as submitted; and**
- ii) the proposed schedules of fees and charges for 2010/11, as set out on pages 73 to 74 of Appendix 'F' be approved, to be effective either from the first week of April 2010 or 1 April 2010 as appropriate.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Director of Finance's Estimates Working Papers 2010/11 File for Corporate Management Committee (part exempt).

9. FRONT OF HOUSE CUSTOMER SERVICES - REVIEW OF THIRD STAGE OF PILOT (DAL)
(Ref: Minutes of Corporate Management Committee 8 January 2009 page 653, para. 424)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To consider the shape of Front of House and customer contact arrangements following the final stage of the pilot.

2. Background Information

2.1 The Committee may recall the history of this initiative, which can summarised in outline as follows:-

- a) During 2006 the Council considered proposals to reconfigure its Front of House services. Originally the aspiration was to achieve 80% resolution of enquiries at first point of contact by establishing a call centre. This was abandoned on grounds of cost, but the aim remained to achieve a high percentage of first contact resolutions while maintaining or enhancing the already high level of existing customer satisfaction. The Council also wished to achieve a cultural change in relation to inter-departmental working.
- b) In January 2007 the Civic Offices Reprovision Sub-Committee approved an 18 month three phase pilot project.
- c) As constituted for the first stage of the pilot, the new Front of House resource was largely drawn from existing front desk staff in various departments. The aim was to enhance the service by providing a wide range of information on Runnymede services, and undertaking a variety of routine transactions, at first point of contact. The unit would deal with most personal callers and operate the central switchboard. The existing direct dial arrangements and the benefits call centre were left in place. The separate departmental reception points were discontinued.
- d) During this early stage the core Front of House resource was augmented by a maximum of six 'virtual' operators drawn from existing back office staff. These staff remained located within their respective departments and continued to devote the majority of their time to existing duties. Budgetary provision was made to replace the time spent on Front of House duties.
- e) The virtual operator concept had to be abandoned as impractical towards the end of the first stage pilot. Instead two part-time permanent staff were recruited, mainly funded from the virtual operator budget.
- f) One of the front line reception staff was modestly upgraded and given responsibility for overseeing the front line reception work.
- g) Training was limited and largely confined to briefing sessions from back office departments.
- h) In December 2007 the Civic Offices Reprovision Sub-Committee considered a report on the first phase. The Sub-Committee decided against any radical change to the service, and decided to continue the approach into the second phase, which was to cover the first few months of operation in the new offices. Opening hours were extended to match the Police and Library on Tuesday evenings and all day on Saturdays. Up to this point the project had been overseen by a Project Manager seconded from the Department of Administration and Leisure, but now a Customer Services Manager was recruited to take the project forward, on a time limited contract expiring in January 2009.
- i) This Committee considered the outcome of phase two of the pilot in January 2009. The service had been further consolidated. A queue management system had been installed together with an information display for customers. The tripartite working relationship between the Council, Police and Library had been cultivated and was settling down well. It was noted that staffing levels provided no slack for holidays or sickness and that this had an impact on the time to answer telephone calls. Customer traffic both on foot and by telephone had increased significantly since moving into the new building.
- j) At this meeting the Committee also considered the case for a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, the purchase of which had been agreed in principle in

September 2005. Neither Members nor Officers supported the purchase of a CRM at this time.

- k) The Committee also considered whether to modestly expand or enhance the service without a CRM.

2.2 The decisions taken by the Committee at the end of the second stage can be summarised as follows:

- i) to maintain the service in current shape for the immediate future, and to review it again by January 2010;
- ii) to retain the post of Customer Services Manager at least until the end of March 2010;
- iii) not to make additional funding available for displays on the screen in Front of House, which would have to be created out of existing resources;
- iv) to continue the extended opening hours on Tuesday evenings and Saturdays pending a further review in September/October 2010.

2.3 Information was collated for the further review referred to in (iv) above, but was not brought to Committee in view of the wider pattern of service reviews currently being worked up.

2.4 For similar reasons, it is suggested that the Committee allow the post-pilot shape and staffing of the service to be considered in the service review programme rather than fix it now. However, some short-term decisions are necessary. This report aims to bring the situation up to date and to seek authority for those short-term decisions.

3. Report

3.1 Appendix 'G' sets out for the Committee's information a list of the duties currently performed at Front of House.

3.2 Various teething problems with the working environment and technology were reported to the Committee last year. A number of these have been resolved, but the following are worthy of note as continuing:

- Reception can be noisy both for customers and for counter and switchboard staff. To some extent this depends on the number of children prepared to test the suitability of the reception area as an echo chamber.
- The staff and to some extent customers are exposed to cold draughts from the doors, particularly the disabled door.
- Adjustments to the revolving door have greatly diminished the number of incidents in which users, particularly children and the elderly, have suffered minor injuries from it. There do continue, however, to be incidents when the door stops or jams due to inadvertent contact with one of the leaves by members of the public.
- The operation of the disabled door continues to puzzle visitors, particularly approaching from the outside.
- There have been some reliability problems with the queue management system. These are slowly being resolved.

3.3 Good relationships with Library and Police colleagues have continued and the Customer Services Manager has shared with the Police in arranging joint training sessions for staff (as to which see further below).

3.4 Staff numbers continue to pose a problem in maintaining full cover of the front desk and switchboard, particularly at peak times. The service was struggling to meet the Council's target of responding to at least 80% of external calls within 15 seconds (4 rings). However, from summer 2009 use was made of temporary switchboard staff to ensure that two were on the switchboard at least at peak times; this also had benefits in releasing the permanent staff

for greater cover of the front counter. The effect was very marked, with the number of calls answered within the target time rising to over 90% in some months. It is not, however, possible to sustain this additional resource without a budget.

- 3.5 Little training beyond basic briefing was given to staff in the early stages and the Customer Services Manager has arranged additional training in customer care and team working as well as trying to ensure adequate knowledge of the tasks overtaken for back office departments (which require a two way process). These efforts, and the growing experience of the team, have led to more queries being dealt with at first point of contact and appears to have improved customer satisfaction in certain areas. He has also worked with the Police and Tandridge Council on a joint training programme which will enable participants to gain an NVQ level 2 in Customer Service. This course is externally funded and the participating authorities bear incidental costs only. The course is currently under way and is based at Runnymede.
- 3.6 While the implementation of a CRM or a system providing similar benefits must at some point be considered, in order to provide front of house staff with the up-to-date accurate information they require, at this time moving forward with this part of the project would not be appropriate. The Customer Services Manager has been working with the Head of ICT to determine best practice in this area in the light of the future need for closer integration between data and procedures located in the front and back offices. When appropriate a report with a business case evaluation and costed recommendations will be brought forward.

4. Decisions needed for the Future

- 4.1 As originally envisaged, the Council was to take a final view of the shape of the service, at least in the medium term, at the end of the third phase. As mentioned above, it is suggested that a final view await the outcome of the service review process which will necessarily include consideration of the interface with the public, internal communication, and process.
- 4.2 The post of Customer Services Manager has approval until the end of March 2010. The postholder is critical to communication with back office departments, relationships with partners, awareness of best practice from elsewhere, troubleshooting, and the development of initiatives such as the training referred to above and the raising of income through suitable advertising on the Front of House display. Officers see a continued need for the post with the service in its present form. Bearing in mind the service reviews, it is recommended that the post be approved for a further temporary period of 12 months, with a decision on the long term future to be taken in light of the outcome of the reviews. It has, however, been possible to reduce the hours of the post from full time to 25.5 per week. This is sufficient for the service in its present form following the end of the pilot period.
- 4.3 The number of customers on Tuesday evenings and Saturdays does not justify the expense of opening on a cost/benefit basis. Apart from meetings, typically fewer than 5 customers visit on Tuesday evenings and fewer than 20 all day on Saturdays. A significant proportion of these are only bringing letters for delivery, which could be left in the post box. Members might wish to consider eliminating Tuesday evening opening and reducing Saturday opening to mornings only, again pending the service review. The Police and Library service should be consulted as they are likely to continue their present opening arrangements, and it would also be sensible to ask the Police to lock up on the occasions when the Council is closed.

5. Resource Implications

- 5.1 The retention of the post of Customer Services Manager has no impact on the financial forecast as provision is already included.
- 5.2 A sum of £14,000 is included in the current year's budget for the additional cost of out of hours opening. Were the Council to reduce the opening time to, say, 4 hours on a Saturday the cost would be approximately halved. This additional service depends on the goodwill and co-operation of staff to ensure cover, as it is not taken into account in the staffing establishment or in terms and conditions of service.

6. UNISON Comments

- 6.1 UNISON is pleased that investigation and investment in training which leads to a recognised qualification is being undertaken. This illustrates the changed nature and responsibility of

the posts and their heightened role and relationship with back office functions. UNISON has no objections to the Officers' recommendation that opening hours on a Saturday be reduced and the Tuesday evening opening be removed; the cost outweighs the benefit and its continuance cannot be justified in the current financial climate. UNISON has been assured that any recommendations arising from the service reviews which might impact on Customer Services will be subject to full consultation with the staff and UNISON.

7. Conclusion

7.1 The Committee is recommended to approve the short term decisions outlined in Section 4 of this report pending a review of the role and shape of the Front of House function in conjunction with the substantial exercise of service reviews to be undertaken during the coming year.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

- i) the post of Customer Services Manager be continued for a further 12 months;**
- ii) the Director of Administration and Leisure be instructed to consult with the Police and Library service on the reduction of the out of hours reception service for the Council, and subject to this consultation, to reduce additional opening hours to 4 hours on Saturday mornings;**
- iii) the Chief Executive and Director of Administration and Leisure be instructed to ensure that the nature and staffing of the Front of House function is considered in conjunction with the programme of service reviews; and**
- iv) consideration of a CRM be delayed until the costs and benefits of different approaches have been revisited and a new business case approved.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

Final phase evaluation of reception pilot by Customer Services Manager and DAL, October 2009.

10. LOCAL DEMOCRACY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CONSTRUCTION ACT 2009 (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To advise Members of the key provisions of this new Act which received Royal Assent on 12 November 2009. The report below is set out under the headings used by the Act and concentrates on provisions affecting the duties of this authority.**

1.2 **Officers acknowledge basing this report upon a summary of the Act provided by Eversheds, Solicitors.**

2. Part 1: Democracy & Involvement

2.1 Chapter 1: Duties Relating to Promotion of Democracy

2.1.1 Section 1 requires principal local authorities to "promote understanding" amongst local people of:

- The functions of the authority;
- The democratic arrangements of the authority (arrangements for members of the public to participate in, or influence the making of decisions); and
- How members of the public can take part in those democratic arrangements and what is involved in taking part - including how to become a member; what members do; and what support is available from the authority.

The proposed duty draws upon the work undertaken by the Councillors Commission in 2007, to which the Government responded in 2008. There are related requirements for other public bodies.

- 2.1.2 The provisions go on to require county councils to provide district councils with information in relation to their district at least once a year. Section 6 provides for the Secretary of State to give guidance to local authorities in how to discharge their duties under this chapter.

2.2 Chapter 2: Petitions to Local Authorities

- 2.2.1 These provisions (sections 10-22 inclusive) aim to make local decision making more transparent and require local authorities to respond to petitions which meet certain criteria. Section 11 requires local authorities to make a scheme for handling valid petitions and Section 10 requires authority to make e-petition facilities available. Where petitions are deemed to be valid then there is a requirement to acknowledge the petition within a specified period and to take certain steps (so long as the petition is not vexatious, abusive or otherwise inappropriate). Valid petitions must also relate to a "relevant matter", i.e. functions of the authority or an improvement in the economic, social or environmental wellbeing of the authority's area to which any of its partner authorities could contribute.

- 2.2.2 The authority's petition scheme will include how the authority will deal with petitions, e.g. holding a public meeting; commissioning research; giving effect to the request in the petition; holding an inquiry; referring it to Overview and Scrutiny or otherwise. The scheme should also identify whether the petition is one which requires debate or requires an Officer to be called to account, in which case certain additional steps must be taken. The appropriate national authority may give guidance as to what should be in a petition scheme (Section 19) and for handling petitions by other relevant authorities under Section 20.

- 2.2.3 These provisions are not yet in force and Officers will report further. Some of the required material is already in Standing Orders.

2.3 Chapter 3: Involvement in Functions of Public Authorities

- 2.3.1 Section 23 places a duty on various public authorities, including the Arts Council, Sports Council, Environment Agency, Natural England, Regional Development Agencies, Chief Officers of Police, etc. to involve representatives of interested persons in the exercise of their functions, where they consider that it is appropriate to do so. Those authorities need to consider ways of securing such involvement, through informing representatives, consulting them and involving them in other ways.

- 2.3.2 This chapter complements the changes made to the best value duty for local authorities with effect from 1 April 2009 by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007.

2.4 Chapter 4: Housing

- 2.4.1 This chapter, in force now, deals with the establishment of a body to represent or facilitate the representation of views of tenants of social housing in England or other residential property in England. The body may also conduct or commission research into issues affecting such tenants and promote the representation by other bodies. The body may also have other functions.

2.5 Chapter 5: Local Freedoms and Honorary Titles

- 2.5.1 This part, inter alia, amends section 249 Local Government Act 1972 to make freedom gender specific, so allowing honorary freewomen and alderwomen to be created. This and Chapter 6 (below) come into force on 12 February 2010.

2.6 Chapter 6: Politically Restricted Posts

- 2.6.1 This removes the requirement for local authorities to prepare and maintain a list of posts for which the annual remuneration exceeds a specified amount. Such posts are no longer politically restricted.
3. Part 2: Local Authorities: Governance and Audit
- 3.1 Chapter 1: Governance
- 3.1.1 Section 31 of the Act requires every county council and single tier authority to appoint a designated "Scrutiny Officer" to promote the role of Overview and Scrutiny Committees, provide support for Overview and Scrutiny Committees; and provide support and guidance to members and Officers in relation to overview and scrutiny committees.
- This requirement does not apply to District Councils.
- 3.1.2 Section 32 enables the Secretary of State to authorise two or more local authorities of any kind (not just counties with districts, as the existing law) to appoint joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
- 3.2 Chapter 2: Mutual Insurance
- 3.2.1 There is now explicit power for local authorities to participate in a corporate body which would be able to provide insurance to local authorities and affiliates. This removes the problem created by a recent Court of Appeal decision holding that existing powers were not adequate to do this.
- 3.2.2 During the later stages of the Bill, the Government rejected a call by a number of Conservative MPs for a power of general competence for local authorities. The proposed power would allow local authorities to undertake any activity or business, do any act or enter into any transaction for the benefit of their area or its inhabitants or people present. However, as part of the commitment to local authorities from the consultation "Strengthening Local Democracy" the Government has said that it will look at powers again. The Conservatives have made it clear that they will introduce a power of general competence if elected at the next General Election. This will not do away with the requirement for authorities to exercise their powers properly, reasonably, for proper purposes and in accordance with procedural requirements.
- 3.3 Chapter 3: Audit of Entities Connected with Local Authorities
- 3.3.1 There are new provisions regarding audit of entities connected with local government. The Audit Commission is empowered to appoint auditors for such entities. The definition covers companies, limited liability partnerships and industrial and provident societies.
- 3.3.2 The auditors must follow relevant codes of practice and may issue public interest reports if anything comes to their attention in discharging their functions where they consider it would be in the public interest to bring the matter to the attention of the entity, the local authority with which it is connected, or the public.
4. Part 3: Local Government Boundary and Electoral Change
- 4.1 The Local Government Boundary Commission for England is established as a body corporate rather than being under the responsibility of the Electoral Commission. Its role is to undertake reviews of areas of each principal council from time to time. This could cover the number of members, wards and relevant boundaries as well as the name of electoral areas and any consequential parish changes. Councils may also request reviews and recommendations for single member electoral areas.
5. Strong and prosperous communities Parts 4-7
- 5.1 These provisions advance the Government's agenda that no longer will local authorities simply be responsible for the delivery of a bundle of services but will be expected to take a significant community lead in making economic prosperity a priority. This is linked with the 'Comprehensive Area Assessment' performance framework imposed upon local government

with effect from Spring 2009 requiring a view of their work collectively with other agencies.

5.2 Part 4: Local Authority Economic Assessments

5.2.1 From a date appointed by the Secretary of State, each County Council, Metropolitan Council, Unitary Council and London Borough will have a duty to prepare an assessment of the economic conditions of their area. An authority may revise its assessment, or any part or aspect of it, at any time, and must do so if the Secretary of State directs it to. It must consult its partner authorities and any other persons it considers appropriate in carrying out its economic assessment.

5.2.2 A County Council must consult and seek the participation of the District Councils within its area in carrying out its assessment. The County Council must also have regard to any material produced by District Councils in the discharge of their responsibilities under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to keep under review matters which may be expected to affect the development of their area or the planning of its development. District Councils are required to co-operate with the County Council.

5.3 Part 5: Regional Strategy

5.3.1 This part of the Act comes into force on a day appointed by the Secretary of State. There will be a regional strategy in each region other than London. A regional strategy must set out policies in relation to sustainable economic growth, development and the use of land within the region and can include different policies for different areas within the region. Policies are to include policies designed to contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. In the event of conflict, the policies included in the strategy prevail over any other information in the strategy.

5.3.2 The regional strategy will replace both the existing regional spatial strategy (which sets out the Secretary of State's policies in relation to the development and use of land within the region) and the regional economic strategy for the region (the strategy produced by the regional development agency for the region relating to its purposes including the furtherance of economic development and regeneration of the region, the promotion of employment, business efficiency and investment, and contribution to sustainable development).

5.3.3 To maintain continuity when these provisions come into force, the regional strategy will consist of the existing regional spatial strategy and regional economic strategy.

5.3.4 Outside London, county and district councils (with the National Park and Broads Authorities where relevant) are to set up "Leaders' Boards". The Leaders' Board is a means to enable local authorities to act collectively and decisively at regional level. They will enable local government representation at regional level. District and County Councils and (where relevant) National Park authorities and the Broads Authority must make and consult on a scheme for establishing and operating a Leaders' Board. The participating authorities must submit the scheme to the Secretary of State for approval before establishing the body in accordance with the approved scheme. The Secretary of State has the power to fund the Leaders' Board or a participating authority in respect of that Board. It also gives the Secretary of State power to withdraw approval for the Leaders' Board where this is not operating effectively.

5.3.5 There are detailed procedural provisions for establishing a Regional Strategy. The Secretary of State has reserve power to revise a regional strategy, in whole or in part, where the responsible regional authorities fail to do so.

5.3.6 There is therefore interaction between the regional strategy and the local development plan framework. It still remains the responsibility of the local planning authority to develop its local development plan framework but it must do so in conjunction with the emerging regional strategy.

5.4 Part 6: Economic Prosperity Boards and Combined Authorities

- 5.4.1 This part of the Act comes into force on a day appointed by the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State can establish an Economic Prosperity Board (EPB) for an area, consisting of the whole of two or more local Government areas in England. An EPB will have functions relating to the economic development and regeneration of its area. The Secretary of State can prescribe the membership of an EPB, the voting powers of members of the EPB, and the executive arrangements of the EPB. Executive arrangements are arrangements for an EPB to set up an executive to make specific decisions, especially the day to day decisions, on its behalf. An executive would be expected to be smaller and more stream-lined but could not determine the budget of the EPB.
- 5.4.2 Where an order is made in relation to the constitution of an EPB, it must provide that a majority of the EPB's members must be elected members of the local authorities for the EPB's area.
- 5.4.3 The Secretary of State can make functions of a County Council or District Council within the EPB's area exercisable by the EPB. An EPB must perform functions that are exercisable by the EPB with a view to promoting economic development and regeneration in its area.
- 5.4.4 Any two or more authorities may review the effectiveness and efficiency of arrangements to promote economic development and regeneration within the geographical area covered by the review. Where a review is conducted by the County Council, the review area must include the whole of any one or more of the districts within the County. Where it is conducted by the Council for a district, the review area must include that district.
- 5.4.5 The Secretary of State can make an order establishing a combined authority for an area which meets specified conditions. A combined authority will have functions relating to economic development and regeneration and transport. Combined authorities can only be established if the Secretary of State considers that to do so is likely to improve:
- the exercise of statutory functions relating to transport in the area
 - the effectiveness and efficiency of transport in the area
 - the exercise of statutory functions relating to economic development and regeneration in the area, and
 - economic conditions in the area.
- 5.4.6 The exercise of any function in this Part of the Act must be undertaken in accordance with guidance from the Secretary of State.

5.5 Part 7: Multi-Area Agreements

- 5.5.1 This part of the Act comes into force on 12 January 2010. It makes arrangements for multi-area agreements ("MAAs") which are agreements between two or more local authorities and certain partner authorities, approved by the Secretary of State. It gives the Secretary of State the power to direct a nominated local authority (the 'responsible authority') to prepare an MAA in consultation with partner authorities and others specified in guidance (which might include persons from the voluntary and community sector and local businesses). The local authority and partner authorities are placed under a duty to co-operate with each other in determining local improvement targets for the area to be included in the MAA, and a duty to have regard to the targets.
- 5.5.2 A multi-area agreement is an agreement specifying improvement targets for a geographic area for which there are two or more local authorities. This area can be non-contiguous so that it may, for example, cover the area of two local authorities which are separated by the area of a third local authority which is not to be part of the multi-area agreement.

- 5.5.3 An improvement target is a target for improvement in the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area or part of the area covered by the multi-area agreement. For example, an improvement target might specify an improvement to be achieved in the whole of the area covered by the agreement, or it might apply only to specific ward(s) in the area. The target must also 'relate' to a local authority for the area, a partner authority, or another person acting, or having functions exercisable in the area. An individual or body is taken to have consented to a target applying to it if it has agreed to the target (or any subsequent change to it) being specified in the multi-area agreement. An Economic Prosperity Board is a local authority for this purpose.

6. Conclusion

- 6.1. The Act introduces or amends a number of important provisions which will affect the way local Government works in the future, and will continue the process of requiring more working with other authorities. Some have resource implications. Further reports will be brought as required.

(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Briefing note from Eversheds dated 30 November 2009; Government's explanatory notes to the Act.

11. INDEPENDENT SAFEGUARDING AUTHORITY – VETTING AND BARRING SCHEME (DAL)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **To advise members of changes to employment law for people undertaking a "Regulated Activity". Regulated activity is any activity which involves working with children or vulnerable adults frequently, intensively, and/or overnight. This could be paid or voluntary work.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 Under the Protection of Children Act 1999, "child care organisations" were obliged to ask the CRB to check the names of prospective employees against a list maintained under the Act (the PoCA List) in which the Secretary of State recorded the names of individuals considered unsuitable to work with children. In addition for many years the Department for Education and Skills maintained a confidential list (List 99) of individuals who would be barred from working in schools or undertaking certain kinds of paid and voluntary social work, most recently given statutory force under section 142 of the Education Act 2002. Entry on the PoCA list automatically ensured entry on List 99. The third element of protection was introduced under the Care Standards Act 2000 under which the Secretary of State for Health maintained a list (the POVA List) of care workers guilty of misconduct harming vulnerable adults. From 26 July 2004, registered care providers were obliged to request a check against the POVA list when considering a person for a care position. All three lists, though maintained by different bodies, could only be checked in conjunction with a CRB check.
- 2.2 The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 introduces a Vetting and Barring Scheme (VBS) in order to try to improve the safety of recruitment to positions serving vulnerable groups. The Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) has been set up to implement the scheme and to make decisions on who should be banned from working with children and vulnerable adults.
- 2.3 The intention is ultimately that all those working with vulnerable groups should be registered to ensure that anyone who presents a known risk is not added to the register, and is therefore prevented from working with them.
- 2.4 The VBS was launched on 12 October 2009 but registration under the scheme will not start until July 2010. Some procedures are however now in operation as detailed below.

3. Report

- 3.1 From 12 October 2009 the POCA and POVA lists and List 99 are replaced by the new "Children's" and "Vulnerable Adults" lists. Eventually everyone providing a regulated activity will have to be registered with the ISA. Individuals undertaking a regulated activity may be barred from working with children or vulnerable adults.
- 3.2 Enhanced CRB checks, which will reveal ISA registration and whether an individual has been barred, will be required for anyone undertaking a regulated activity as defined by the Act. Regulated activities include (i) specified categories of "frequent" or "intensive" contact with children or vulnerable adults such as teaching, training, care, and transport; (ii) activities allowing "frequent" or "intensive" contact in specified places such as schools or adult care homes, or (iii) the holding of certain positions or roles. Current proposals are that frequent contact will mean at least once a week, and intensive contact will mean on four or more days in a 30 day period, or overnight. More specific guidance will be available to employers in the near future.
- 3.3 The new Act imposes a duty on employers, social services and professional regulators to refer to the ISA any information about individuals who may pose a risk. There will be criminal penalties for barred individuals who seek or undertake work with vulnerable groups and for employers who knowingly take them on.
- 3.4 From 26 July 2010 a new CRB form will be introduced and checks as to whether a person is ISA registered (see below) can be done as part of an enhanced CRB check, or free online. New staff, staff who are changing roles to take on a regulated activity and staff changing jobs whilst working in a regulated activity **may** apply for ISA registration which will include a CRB check.
- 3.5 From November 2010 all staff new to the workforce, those who are changing roles to take on a regulated activity and those changing jobs whilst working in a regulated activity **must** apply for ISA registration.
- 3.6 Over the following four years other changes will be introduced. From January 2011 existing employees working in a regulated role with no CRB check must apply for ISA registration, from 2012 existing employees with CRB checks over 3 years old must apply for ISA registration, from 2013 existing employees with more recent CRB checks must apply for ISA registration and from 2014 all remaining staff with CRB checks must apply for ISA registration.
- 3.7 In addition to the new concept of regulated activity, from which people can be barred under the VBS, a new category of "controlled activity" will be introduced. This includes support work in health and education, and adult social care, and work for certain organisations with access to sensitive records on children or vulnerable adults. Staff undertaking a controlled activity will need to be ISA registered, but it may still be possible to employ a barred person in a controlled post subject to safeguards. Further information is awaited to enable Officers to identify any Runnymede posts in this category.
- 3.8 When a person becomes ISA registered they will be continuously monitored and their status reassessed against any new information which may come to light. ISA will notify the employer of any changes in status. It is important to note that details of an individual's criminal history will still only be available through a CRB check, as the ISA only confirms if a person is barred from working with children or vulnerable adults. Certain kinds of conviction might not bar them from working with children or vulnerable adults but could require a risk assessment by the employer before deciding whether and how to permit such work.
- 3.9 Recent press coverage has led to some confusion and fear over the effect of the Act. The basic rules summarised in paragraph 3.2 above are as now projected following the controversy. More guidance will emerge as the Act moves towards implementation. In the meantime, details of the application process, the new forms, and the online checking service are still being developed.
- 3.10 The introduction of the ISA will require amendments to the current safeguarding policy to specify that staff working with children and vulnerable adults are registered, and this will be programmed to meet the timescales detailed above.
4. Financial Implications

- 4.1 The cost of inclusion on the ISA register is expected to be £64. An enhanced CRB check is made during this process. Registration is the individual's responsibility and the registration is "portable" – i.e., will be good for any employment. Currently the cost of CRB checks for Runnymede staff (which will still be required) is funded by the employing section or department. An enhanced CRB check costs £36 (free for volunteers). The cost of ISA registration could be borne by the employee but it is considered appropriate for the employer to bear this whenever Runnymede staff need to be registered for the first time. Many will not need it except for their employment with Runnymede and many of them will be staff such as seasonal play staff and leisure centre staff who are on low incomes.
- 4.2 The cost of first registration for staff needing it over the first three years of the scheme has been estimated at £10,000, reducing to £6,000 per annum from year 4. Further cost will depend on how the Council wishes to approach CRB checks. If staff being recruited into posts working with vulnerable adults and children are expected only to provide details of their ISA registration then checking would be free. If CRBs are required, even if the individual is ISA registered, there would continue to be a cost at £36 a time. A further report will be brought to the Committee on this but there may be merit in continuing the existing regime of CRB checking, or something similar, as it will inform responsible risk assessment and the only hard information from ISA registration will be whether or not an individual is barred. There is also the question of whether to require CRB rechecks after first appointment, although the current policy requires rechecking only in occasional circumstances.
5. Council Policy
- 5.1 The Council's existing Safeguarding Policy was approved in October 2008. Many of its provisions will not need to be changed but it will require amendment to reflect the legislation. As mentioned above, a further report will be submitted to the Committee.
- 5.2 UNISON has been consulted on this report and is content with the Officers' recommendations.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) Officers be instructed to make all necessary arrangements to comply with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 and to ensure that relevant staff are registered and checked as required;**
- ii) the Council bear the cost of first registration under the Vetting and Barring scheme for staff when this is necessary; and**
- iii) a further report be made on the amendments required to the Council's Safeguarding Policy, including the question of whether staff working with children and vulnerable adults who have an ISA registration will require CRB checks.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

12. PURCHASE OF PLANT FOR THE DEPOT (DTS)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 **To seek approval to purchase an ex contract hire 5 year old JCB "Loadall" telescopic handler for various material handling tasks at the Chertsey Depot.**

2. Background Information

- 2.1 The item of plant is currently subject to a 5 year contract hire agreement with the Council which is due to expire in February 2010.
- 2.2 A like for like replacement on a similar 5 year contract hire arrangement would cost £8,100 per annum.

3. Report

- 3.1 This machine is essential for all of the services that the DSO provides and would be used for day to day and emergency planning purposes as set out below.

Day to Day Use

- 3.2 The primary purpose of this item of plant is materials handling. It would be used on almost a daily basis for off loading deliveries which arrive on pallets using the forklift attachment.
- 3.3 The loader is essential for unloading bulky and heavy palletted items from delivery vehicles. It normally requires one member of the depot staff, the loader driver, and avoids the need for manual handling. Some items are too large for manual handling and there is no alternative. Where several smaller items have to be unloaded from pallets the alternative would be to unload each item separately and manually. This would be time consuming for depot staff and would delay the delivery vehicle for an unreasonable time. It would also require depot staff to climb onto or into delivery vehicles and lift the items down from a height. The DSO has worked towards eliminating manual handling from staff duties, so this would be a backward step.
- 3.4 Apart from the forks the loader is also equipped with a general purpose shovel for loading loose materials.

Emergency Planning Use

- 3.5 Members have been keen to ensure that the Council can provide a reasonable level of support to residents and businesses in the event of a civil emergency. Following the flooding in January 2003, the Council reviewed its ability to respond to flooding. As a result, the Council invested in a new sandbag filling machine for Chertsey depot and in a truck with a crane attachment. The truck has a high ground clearance for negotiating water and the crane attachment for loading and delivering sandbags to affected areas. During flooding, the sandbag filling machine enables large numbers of sandbags to be filled quickly for delivery by the truck with the crane attachment. The sandbag filling machine needs to be loaded quickly with large amounts of sand and cannot be loaded manually. During times of flooding the telescope handler will be operated 24 hours a day filling the hopper of the sandbag filling machine and loading filled sandbags on to the delivery vehicles.
- 3.6 The Borough maintains a stock of rock salt for 'gritting' Council properties such as car parks and Day Centres during periods of ice and snow. The loading shovel is essential to assist loading the various vehicles deployed at this time and, again, it cannot be done manually.
- 3.7 High winds and the fallen trees and debris that result from storms are more frequent than flooding and the DSO staff is often required to deal with fallen trees where they are obstructing Council land. They also deal with trees on private land where they are hazardous to the public or are at risk of damaging buildings. Sometimes the DSO is required to remove trees that are blocking public roads when Surrey County Council contractors are unable to cope with the demand. The DSO has staff that are trained with chain saws who cut the fallen trees into sections that can be lifted and removed by the loader. It would require a much greater effort to cut the trees into smaller sections that could be manually lifted and, again, this would re-introduce manual handling. The machine would also be useful for clearing flytipped material blocking access to properties.

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 Alternative options would be to contract hire a new machine for the sum of £8,100 per annum or purchase a brand new machine at a cost of £30,750, plus £1,895 per annum contract maintenance.

5. Environmental Implications

- 5.1 The incidents of natural emergencies such as storms and flooding have increased in recent years. This item of plant will maintain the Council's emergency response capability.
- 5.2 The Council's performance in dealing with fly tips will also be maintained.

6. Health and Safety

6.1 The frequency of manual handling injuries to the workforce is significantly reduced using mechanical handling equipment.

7. Financial Implications

7.1 The cost of purchasing the existing vehicle is £15,000 and it is anticipated that it will last for a minimum of 5 years. To contract hire an equivalent machine would cost £8,100 per year.

7.2 The annual running costs, excluding fuel, of the JCB based on a 5 year period are estimated to be £4,600, including the cost of capital. The purchase option therefore results in a net betterment of £3,500 per year.

7.3 This Committee approved a new set of net revenue reductions in November 2008 and in September 2009 but despite this, the Council is still looking for a further net revenue reduction of £850,000 as a minimum across all services. Any savings to existing services are to be welcomed.

7.4 The purchase of this vehicle will require a capital estimate for which there is currently no provision.

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that –

a capital estimate of £15,000 be approved for the purchase of an ex contract hire JCB “Loadall” telescopic handler, and provision be made in the Capital Programme accordingly.

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None stated

13. OPTIONS FOR PAYMENT UNDER THE ELECTRONIC LICENSING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (CE)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 **To consider the implications of the EU Services Directive on electronic licensing and to recommend a payment option under the Electronic Licensing Management System.**

2. Background Information

2.1 The EU Services Directive on electronic licensing has the stated objective of breaking down barriers to cross border trade in services between countries in the EU.

2.2 The Services Directive does not change the functions of local authorities in dealing with licence applications. These stem from existing UK legislation. What it does do is oblige all licensing authorities, including this Council, to make the application process available on-line so that it can be accessed from anywhere within the EU.

2.2 The deadline for compliance with this directive is 28 December 2009.

2.3 In order to facilitate provision of this facility, the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) has commissioned a web forms service which has been named ELMS (Electronic Licensing Management System).

2.4 Using the ELMS website a licence applicant from any European country will be able to apply for a licence and make payment.

3. Runnymede Requirements

- 3.1 Runnymede has subscribed to the ELMS service and this will be a means of the public making an application on-line. Once the forms have been completed the applicant will be directed by ELMS to the Runnymede web site in order to make the appropriate payment.
- 3.2 This payment will use the existing on-line arrangements which are handled by the Cash Receipting System (Paris) supplied by Northgate Information Systems (NIS).
- 3.3 Once the payment has been accepted ELMS will have to be informed that the correct payment has been accepted so that the licence application can be completed.
4. Options to Achieve Compliance
 - 4.1 A system will have to be put in place to ensure that the payment is accepted from ELMS, is confirmed to be accurate and a notification is returned to ELMS.
 - 4.2 Four ways of doing this have been identified. These are:
 - 4.2.1 A temporary manual process could be put in place. This would allow the applicant, having completed the forms on ELMS and been given the amount payable, to be directed to the Council payments facility on the Council's own web site. The applicant would then be given the reference number to enter and would fill out the payment form on the Council web site, entering the amount to be paid. With this solution, instead of a response going back to ELMS confirming payment had been accepted, Council staff would have to check the payment amount was correct, match the payment to the application and send confirmation to ELMS that payment had been successful, at which time the application would be completed by ELMS.
 - 4.2.2 Payment could be made through an ELMS interface to WorldPay. This would handle the authorisation process and the funds would then be sent to Runnymede where a much simpler interface would accept the aggregated payments.
 - 4.2.3 For ELMS to produce all items of information and have them recognised by the cash receipting system (Paris) an interface needs to be written that will send the correct data from ELMS. To do this task NIS have a general module named Paris e-Forms. This would permit a similar interface to be established with all systems within the Council that identify services that could be paid on-line such as payment for services at the sports centres and in environmental health. The cost of purchasing and installing this module has been quoted by Northgate as being approximately £24,500 plus expenses.
 - 4.2.4 As there are a number of Paris customers in the same position as Runnymede, NIS are making available an interface that utilises Paris e- Forms but with functionality restricted to licensing and ELMS. This would cost the Council £12,750 plus expenses. This figure includes installation.
 - 4.3 The costs and risks associated with these four routes are summarised at Appendix 'H'.
5. Summary of Options
 - 5.1 The manual solution has been rejected in that it is high risk. It depends on numbers of applications remaining very low and the costs of making people re-apply when any of the details are incorrect are unpredictable. It is also inevitably a short term solution that will have to be addressed in the New Year. There is also the risk that ELMS may require an automated process at any time. Also from the applicant's point of view the process is not completed in one visit as confirmation of payment will not be returned to ELMS until the next working day. It therefore runs counter to the Council's National Indicator 14 objectives.
 - 5.2 Using the ELMS payment method through WorldPay is not recommended, as although this is slightly cheaper than the Paris e-Forms for ELMS solution referred to in paragraph 5.4, it does not conform with the overall strategy of concentrating all income through the cash receipting system. Also it does not provide a solution that can be built on elsewhere in the Council and will always be a set of processes divorced from the mainstream developments within the Council.

- 5.3 Implementing the full Web Forms module has the advantage of accelerating the movement of payments to the more cost effective on-line payments and will have to be done at some stage in future to achieve Government targets. It is clear that an increasing number of transactions will follow this payment module in future and at some stage this will be the solution that should be installed.
- 5.4 Putting in the interface to ELMS alone has the advantage of keeping cost to a minimum in this financial year. Upgrading to the full Paris e- Forms functionality will build on the initial work and only incur a minimum of overlapped time and effort. NIS have agreed in writing that the cost of the Paris e-Forms ELMS solution could be offset against the purchase of the full Paris e-Forms product purchased at a later date.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The EU Directive has now been enshrined in UK law and compliance is mandatory. It is important that the Council put in a place a system that will ensure this compliance. Failure to do so would run the risk of having to deal with time consuming complaints and loss of reputation for the Council as a provider of all services required by statute.
- 6.2 Using the wholly manual process has not been approved by ELMS and so may prove to be more complex than anticipated. It also runs the risk of creating unnecessary work if the public are not wholly accurate with the information they provide to make payments.
- 6.3 The ELMS/WorldPay solution would offer some savings in the short term when compared with the Paris e-Forms ELMS route but would not be compatible with the later introduction of full Paris e-Forms. When this factor is taken into account the latter is the more cost effective.
- 6.4 Provision of the ELMS interface with the special version of the e-Forms module for Paris is therefore the solution that provides the lowest level of risk at the most cost effective price.
- 6.5 The IT Member Working Group considered this matter at its meeting on 14 December 2009 and concurred with this analysis. The Group made the following recommendations to this Committee.

IT MEMBER WORKING GROUP'S RECOMMENDATION that –

- i) the additional Paris e-Forms module that deals specifically with payments from ELMS be purchased and installed at a cost not exceeding £12,750, plus expenses;**
- ii) this sum be met from the provision in the 2010/11 capital programme for system upgrades and developments;**
- iii) revenue provision be made for the £1,600 per annum maintenance cost; and**
- iv) the advantages of moving to the full Paris e-Forms be reviewed in the new financial year.**

(TO RESOLVE)

Background Papers

None

14. URGENT ACTION – STANDING ORDER 42

The following action has been taken after consultation with the Chairman of the Committee under Standing Order 42.

<u>Officer</u>	<u>Action</u>	<u>Central Index No</u>
Director of Finance	Approval of the appointment of Spelthorne Borough Council as an agent of the Council to recover Council	709

	Tax and National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR).	
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(FOR INFORMATION)

Background Papers

Proforma No 709 dated 16 November 2009.

15. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

If the Committee is minded to consider the foregoing reports in private session, it is the

OFFICERS' RECOMMENDATION that -

where appropriate, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of the report(s) under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 on the grounds that the report(s) in question would be likely to involve disclosure of exempt information of the description specified in appropriate paragraphs of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.

(TO RESOLVE)

PART II

Matters involving Exempt or Confidential Information in respect of which reports have not been made available for public inspection

a) Exempt Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)

b) Confidential Information

(No reports to be considered under this heading)