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Report to the Policy and Finance Subcommittee
from John Allard, Corporate Policy Manager

Corporate Advisory Services: Operating Plans 2001-2010

1. Purpose

To provide a summary of the Operating Plans within Corporate Advisory Services.

2. Overview

The Corporate Advisory Services budget includes the following departments:

- Employment Services
- Communications
- Corporate Policy

The three functions have different focuses. Employment Services looks after the human resources issues for the Council including such areas as advising managers on salaries, industrial relations, assisting with recruitment, health and safety and staff training. Communications' role is to provide specialist expertise to assist in all areas of communications from major corporate projects to promotional leaflets. Corporate Policy provides an overview of issues affecting the Council as a whole and covers matters which don't fit elsewhere such as advocacy.

The business plans for each of the above areas of responsibility accompany this order paper as separate documents.

3. Key Issues

The operating plans are little changed from last year. There is a minor increase in the employment relations area to cover a staffing decision. Elsewhere the provisions made in the ten year plan have remained unchanged. In particular, with the communications review in progress, the neutral position of retaining that budget at the same level has been taken.

Councillors will recall that \$350,000 p.a. has been allowed to support economic sustainability from 2002/03 onwards. Whilst not yet critical, Council will need to consider if it retains this provision and, if so, how it should be used. Previously it has been recognised that a law change might be required. It is quite possible that that law change could occur via the current review of the Local Government Act. Alternatively, Council may identify a worthwhile initiative that is within the Council's current statutory empowerment.

4. Financial Implications

Costs remain little changed except the increase for 2002/03 with the possible economic sustainability investment.

5. Recommendations

- (1) *That the report be received and the contents noted.*
- (2) *That the following proposed operating plans be approved in principle:*
 - *Employment Services*
 - *Communications*
 - *Corporate Policy*
- (3) *That the proposed operating plans for the above activities be recommended to the Policy and Finance Committee for inclusion in the Council's Long Term Financial Strategy 2001-2010 (incorporating Council's 2001/02 Annual Plan).*

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