

73/05 - **COMMUNICATIONS:**

01. **DISTRICT ELECTION COUNT:** The Mayor advised that a decision had still to be taken as to when the election count for the forthcoming District elections would take place, following doubt as to whether sufficient volunteers would be forthcoming to undertake a count immediately following the close of poll, bearing in mind the possibility of extended polling hours for the day of election.

02. **PLANNING ACHIEVEMENTS:** The Mayor wished to record the work undertaken over the last twelve months to improve the services available on the planning part of the HBC website, as judged by the "Pendleton Criteria", as a result of which the authority was now joint first in the country, obtaining the maximum score.

The Chief Executive took the opportunity to advise Council that he had, together with the Head of Planning Services, been summoned to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to discuss concerns over the Council's planning performance. Whilst the meeting had been constructive, the need for the Council to revisit its scheme of delegation for development control had been highlighted, as had that for intervention by the ODPM in late 2006 in the event of the Council still being a Planning Standards authority at that date.

03. **FORMAT OF COUNCIL AGENDA:** The Mayor reminded Members that due to a technical problem with the photocopying facilities, it had not been possible to produce the Council agenda in the normal format but, for the benefit of Members, explained those Minutes of the Cabinet and other Committees which were before the Council for approval.

04. **THEATRE TICKETS:** The Mayor advised of the annual visit to the Harrogate Theatre, which was to take place on 7 March 2006, the tickets for which had been made available to Members at this evening's meeting of the Council.

05. **EMPLOYEE OF THE YEAR:** The Local Government Association, in conjunction with the Local Government Channel was looking for nominations from around the country for Council employees who performed above and beyond the call of duty and advised Members of their ability to nominate employees to go forward for the award.

06. **NOTICES OF MOTION:** The Mayor advised of her intention to allow a further Notice of Motion, submitted on behalf of the Liberal Democrat Group in respect of proposed charges for Post 16 Home to School Transport to be debated at this evening's meeting of the Council. In exercising her discretion to allow its debate, the Mayor explained her reasons for the decision, and also her view that it must not form a precedent in terms of the number of motions debated at future meetings of the Council.

