

# Report



meeting	Administration Committee	
date	19 January 2005	agenda item number

## REPORT OF HEAD OF MEMBERS' SERVICES

### INNOVATION FORUM MEMBERSHIP

#### 1. Purpose of Report

To seek approval for the Leader of the County Council and the Chief Executive to represent the County Council at the Innovation Forum

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The County Council was awarded Excellent Status in December 2004, this brings to the County Council membership of the Innovation Forum.
- 2.2 The Innovation Forum was created to promote dialogue between central and local government and its partners, on new ways of working to deliver better services to local communities. The Forum is "jointly owned" by central Government and the councils with excellent CPA scores and it seeks to develop, explore and test new ways of working to deliver improved outcomes for local people.

For central Government, the proven capacity of the excellent councils provides a valuable resource to draw upon in developing new policy around shared local and national priorities. For local government, the Forum provides an opportunity to work jointly with central Government to implement innovative arrangements to improve outcomes in the delivery of services at the frontline and to contribute to central policy development. The work of the Forum is of potential benefit everywhere as the learning from pilots will be shared with the rest of local government and its partners.

The Innovation Forum brings together excellent local authorities and their partners with Government Ministers and their officials. The Forum is facilitated by the ODPM and LGA who help to co-ordinate the respective interests of Government and local authorities, to shape the Forum's work programme and processes and to link the work of the Forum to other Government initiatives and areas of policy. The Idea is

supporting councils who are leading projects and communicating learning through IdeA Knowledge and key events, as well as contributing to the thinking about the Forum as a whole. Membership of the Forum is open for at least a year to councils whose category slips to “good”.

- 2.3 The Innovation Forum has a core group of six leaders who act as a sort of executive when needed, but most of the work is carried out by inviting all or appropriate representatives from Member authorities to participate in think-tanks, workshops or briefing of Ministers etc.
- 2.4 It is a unique opportunity to forge a new relationship with Government and the LGA see it as a key bridgehead for the Improvement Programme.

### **3. Statutory and Policy Implications**

This report is necessary to ensure compliance with the Council's Travel and Accommodation policy and current arrangements for approving attendance at conferences, seminars and Member Training events. The needs of individual travellers will have been considered when compiling the report and, where departures from the policy are recommended, Members should consider the reasons given.

### **4. RECOMMENDATION**

That approval be given for the Leader of the County Council and the Chief Executive to be the County Council's representatives at the Innovation Forum.

#### **Legal Services' Comments (KK)**

The Administration Committee has the delegated authority to approve appointments to outside bodies, relating to functions of Council. The proposal in this report is therefore within the remit of this Committee.

#### **Director of Resources' Financial Comments (R/MB)**

Any costs associated with the Forum Membership will have to be met from the Members Services budget.

#### **Background Papers Available for Public Inspection**

E-mail from Paul Rigg dated 16 December 2004

E-mail from Brenda Truckley dated 16 December 2004

Notes from the meeting of Innovation Forum Leaders dated 15 December 2004.

