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| meeting | ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE | |
| date | 21 September 2005 | agenda item number |

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF MEMBERS' SERVICES

Local Democracy Week 17 – 23 October 2005

Purpose

To secure approval for events and expenditure involving members connected with the Local Government Association's eighth annual 'Local Democracy Week'. This will focus on young people up to the age of 26, particularly those who are 'harder to reach'. The week will run from 17-23rd October.

Background

Following various circulars from the Local Government Association about Local Democracy Week 2005, the Leader asked for proposals to engage young people with councillors during Local Democracy Week.

One of the key facts behind this project is that young people are voting less in elections – for example 68% of 18-24 year olds voted in 1997 and only 39% did in 2001.

By working with young people the authority will increase their understanding of local democracy and services AND create an opportunity for young people to make their voice heard + count. The Leader is proposing the authority take part on two fronts. '**Take your Councillor to school day**' and varying the business of **Council on 20th October** to include approximately 60 young people in the proceedings.

There will be some publicity opportunities arising from these events, Corporate Communications will liaise with media contacts to build interest in the authority's contribution to the week.

What is proposed is as follows:

1. 'Take your Councillor to school day'

- This is scheduled nationally to be on Friday 21st October
- a 'how to' guide is available
- individual members need to name a school of their choice to visit

- The Advisory and Inspection Service (AIS) will liaise with the citizenship co-ordinators in the schools and prepare a pack for the schools
- The AIS need a full list of the schools members want to 'go to school to' on the 21st October, the group whips will provide the list

2. County Council 20 October

- 10.30 young people join Council meeting
- 12.30 adjourn for lunch and Green Paper session
- 13.45 session on Green Paper
- 15.15 Council reconvenes to complete its business (if required)

- Approximately 60 young people, invited by our Young People's Division, will come to County Hall joining members in the Chamber and will participate in the usual 'question-time' and the 'portfolio reports' session. The Council's usual processes (Standing Orders) will be varied to enable this to happen. The young people will be invited to leave their belongings in the members' lounge, where soft drinks will be available for the duration of their stay.
- The young people will be asked to choose a name for their group, choose a leader, deputy and whip. They will receive information about the meeting in advance and will be able to put questions to Cabinet members in accordance with our usual arrangements.
- Clearly, accommodation, Standing Orders and Health and Safety issues will constrain the way in which this is handled. The seating will have to be re-organised to enable the Young People to sit in their own grouping. Although the meeting will start on time, there will be a short delay before business on the agenda is considered. This is to enable Standing Orders to be varied and the young people to be seated. However the Whips will be asked to make sure councillors are in their seats at 10.30. Officers/Media will have to sit in the public gallery to enable this to happen. We will do our best to accommodate our visitors, but there may be a need for some to be in the public gallery. We expect there to be 2 young people with mobility problems, space will be reserved for them
- The business of the Council will be varied to enable our guests to pose questions, formally during question time and to the Cabinet members' portfolio reports. The young people have already been asked to draft questions and these will be submitted in the usual way. In the event that there are large number of questions from them, the Leader of the Council will consult with their leader to determine which questions should be put. The remainder will receive written answers. This may involve

other business being left until after the young people have left in the afternoon.

- Lunch will be altered to be more ‘young people’ friendly and the bar will be closed for the day. Public access through the Assembly Hall will be stopped for the day this should free up the space required.
- The Youth Engagement Team has already met with young people to see what they would like to see happen on the day. Arising from the informal discussions over lunch, the Team will facilitate feedback comparing members’ priorities with the young people in attendance.
- Green Paper Session (1.45 - 3.15). The Assistant Director Young People’s Division, will, along with young people give a short presentation on the Green Paper on ‘What it means to us in Nottinghamshire’. The results of the voting on priorities will be announced, there will be an open debate on the results/key questions and feedback chaired by the Leader in the Rufford Suite (105 capacity theatre style).
- The Council will then reconvene with its usual membership.
- Costs of up to £400 have already been incurred for the planning session, held in Ollerton.

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| 12.30 to 15.15 soft drinks in the members lounge | £ 195 |
| Transport and additional costs, including refreshments, for planning Green Paper discussion | 400 |
| Lunch | cost to be advised at the meeting |

RECOMMENDED

That the Committee approve the expenditure of £595 as described above and that the expenditure be met from County Hospitality.

P A Holt-Murphy
Head of Members' Services

Legal Services' Comments (EB)

The Administration Committee is responsible for authorising hospitality to be offered by the County Council. The proposed expenditure in this report is therefore within the remit of this Committee. However Administration Committee has no authority to set the business of Council Meeting. The proposals in this report would require a vote at Council Meeting to suspend Standing Orders and permit the business referred to in the report to be considered as part of Council Meeting agenda.

Director of Resources Financial Comments (MB)

The financial implications are outlined in the report.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

LGA circular - 'Local Democracy Week: Ideas Into Action' - 22 June 2005

LGA circular - 'Local Democracy Week: Political Speed Dating – 29 June 2005