



meeting	ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE	
date	19 January 2005	agenda item number

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF MEMBERS' SERVICES

EVERY COUNCILLORS COUNTS - UPDATE

Purpose

To update members on progress with the 'Every Councillor Counts' Project.

Background

Following the seminar in May last year, a list of action points were agreed with Cllrs Darrell Pulk and Richard Butler, who have led on the project, to progress the ideas emerging from the seminar.

Progress

The 3 main areas of action can be summarised as:

- 1. Members' Profile**
- 2. Communicating with Members**
- 3. Pre-Election Plans**

1. MEMBERS' PROFILE

New Job Descriptions for members

These have been drafted, there will be consultation with Group Leaders and the intention is to include the job descriptions in the new members' handbook to be published after the May elections.

Local member contact details on media statements, copy to member pre-publication of media statements

The media releases for the Electoral Development Initiative (EDI) and the Building Better Communities (BBC) project both referred to individual members and involved members pre-publication. This could be seen as a model for future practice.

Combining information for master diary, corporate events diary + forward plans for departments

This is being investigated with a view to development by Members' Services.

New prominence on website for members

The working group developing the new website have been made aware of this. The 'your councillor' link on the home page has been moved and highlighted. 'Your Councillors' is now under 'Here to help' and there are links to members in 'You and your community' and there is also a shortcut to 'find your councillor' in the shortcuts menu.

Members to be notified by e-mail of decisions affecting their area on the Delegated decision log

This has now been put in place.

2. COMMUNICATING WITH MEMBERS

Web Surgeries

A pilot session with a member from each of the groups is planned for the New Year.

Contact Centre – Investigate arrangements for members' freephone calls to be routed through the centre

The Contact Centre is currently looking at this.

County Contact – Investigate potential for members to be notified of queries from the public affecting their county divisions

The Contact Centre has agreed to brief members on questions/issues raised by the public which affect individual electoral areas.

Put in place a network of Departmental Contacts (Members' Champions)

This is now in place – the network will be involved in the induction of new members.

Contact Cards for Departments

Chief Officers Management Board have been asked to commission cards like the Environment Department's 'Members' First' publication, in time for the election.

3. PRE-ELECTION PLANS

Mentoring by members, for members

So far, 6 members have indicated they are prepared to be mentors, whatever the result of their individual election. 9 members have indicated they will be mentors, if they are re-elected.

Planning an Induction programme

A steering group has been set up. The group will want to take note of the progress on mentoring, 'members' first' leaflets, scrutiny background, IT for members and departmental contacts.

Scrutiny Background

More background on scrutiny will be provided to enable all members to be kept up to date with how scrutiny is developing and what the select committees are doing. The first of what will become a regular scrutiny bulletin will be published this month. More information on scrutiny will appear on the website and new Scrutiny Guides will be published after the May elections.

Information Technology for members Post-May 2005

A proposal for an IT pack for all members will be presented to the Administration Committee in March.

RECOMMENDED

That the Committee note and endorse the progress made so far on 'Every Councillor Counts'.

P A Holt-Murphy (Ms)
Head of Members' Services

Head of Legal Services' Comments (JF)

The Administration Committee has the delegated authority to deal with this matter.

Background Papers Available for Inspection

'Every Councillor Counts' - Action Plan