

By: Alex King, Deputy Leader
Peter Sass, Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership
Amanda Beer, Director of Personnel & Development
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To: Selection and Members Services Committee – 13 March 2009

Subject: Informal Member Group (IMG's): Member Development and Member Information – Progress Report

Classification: Unrestricted

Introduction

1. This report sets out progress on:-
 - (a) Developing a programme of induction following the County Council elections in June;
 - (b) Continuing work on the County Council's bid to achieve the South East Employers Member Development Charter; and
 - (c) Implementation of the IMG: Member Information recommendations approved by the County Council on 11 December 2008

IMG: Member Information

2. (1) The IMG Members, Mrs Dean, Mr Davies and Mr Parker reconvened with officers from across the authority on 28 January 2009. Officers were invited to volunteer to take ownership and to identify a lead for each of the recommendations.

(2) Attached as appendix 1 to this report is a copy of the recommendations and an indication of the lead officers for each of the recommendations.

(3) Arrangements have been made for the management Board to meet later on this month. The Management Board comprises Mrs Dean, Mr Parker, Mr Davies, Paul Wickenden (representing the Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership). Dr Peter Welsh, Head of Analysis and Information (Project Manager) and Christel Pobgee, Information Services Manager.

(4) Mr King, together with Mrs Dean, Mr Parker and Mr Davies will be meeting again on the afternoon of 13 March 2009 to assess the progress made in taking forward the implementation of the IMG recommendations.

(5) The intention is to have as many of the recommendations implemented prior to the County Council election in June 2009. To achieve this, we propose that delegated authority is given to the Dr Peter Welsh, Project Manager, Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership (or his nominee) in consultation with Mr King (or his nominee), Mrs Dean, Mr Parker, Mr Davies to implement the recommendations of the IMG and to report back to this Committee on a periodic basis.

IMG: Member Development

Induction and Member Development Programme

3. (1) Mary Cooper is moving into a new role to support Members through the County Council election period. Mary will be working with Coral Ingleton, Learning and Development Manager together with colleagues in the directorates to pull together an innovative induction programme. In addition to the 4 days of Great Road trips which are being organised in conjunction with the Directorates to show Members the “jewels in the crown” and challenges for each of the Directorates a General Induction day has also been added to the programme on 9 June 2009.

(2) Attached as Appendix 2 is the draft proposed Member Development and Training programme. This is by no means comprehensive at this stage – but it does indicate for the Committee the ongoing commitment to Member Development and Training. The programme reflects a number of events which have been arranged to reflect the views of Members following the survey conducted by the three political groups in the summer of 2007.

(3) The programme is by no means exhaustive and more events will be added. These already include some bespoke training for Members who will serve on the Committee for Planning Applications, training for all Members on Corporate Parenting, a range of events for health and social care in particular for those Members who will serve on the Scrutiny committee for this area of activity, and the interface with the voluntary sector.

(4) In accordance with the instructions of the IMG a number of events are being organised for the days immediately following the election until the annual meeting of the County Council on 25 June 2009 to give every Member the opportunity to attend sessions around procedural rules for meetings of the County Council, Chairmanship skills, the etiquette of webcasting, questioning techniques, being aware of the role of the Standards Committee and other key topics relevant to the role of a County Councillor.

IMG: Member Development

(5) At its meeting on 24 February the IMG considered:-

Recording of events

(6) Officers are exploring how the recording of events can best be achieved. Whilst events can be webcast and built into the contract for this service to be effective the recording needs to be of TV quality and interactive. This will lead to a competitive tender being prepared.

Member Mentors

(7) The Committee’s views are sought on the suggestion that some of the Members who are not seeking re-election might consider for the first few weeks of the new Council acting as a mentor to some of the new members. This has proved to be very worthwhile in other Authorities.

Member Development Charter

(8) The Committee agreed at its last meeting to delay further work on its bid for the South East Employers Members Development Charter until after the elections.

(9) A complementary tool to the Charter is the Improvement and Development Agency's (IDeA) declaration providing elected Members with the support to deliver the Member role. The IMG looked at this declaration of giving support to elected Members and have made a number of observations which are being explored with the three political groups.

(10) The work of the IMG is not completed on this declaration and therefore the Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership is seeking the delegated authority to finish this piece of work in consultation with the IMG Member Development to enable a report to be submitted to the April meeting of the County Council.

RECOMMENDATIONS

4. The Committee is asked to note the report and agree to delegate authority to:-
 - (a) Dr Peter Welsh, Project Manager and the Head of Democratic Services to implement the decisions of the IMG Member information in consultation with Mr A J King, Mrs T Dean, Mr J Davies and Mr R Parker; and
 - (b) the Head of Democratic Services and Local Leadership in consultation with the IMG Member Development to prepare a report to enable the County Council to support the IDeA's declaration.

Paul Wickenden
Overview, Scrutiny & Localism Manager

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RECOMMENDATION:	DISCUSSION/MINUTE OF THE MEETING	ACTION AGREED	LEAD OFFICER/ GROUP TO ACTION
<p>R1. A Head of Information Management (IM) be appointed reporting to the Chief Executive. Prime duties of this post holder would be to ensure that information is managed as a corporate resource, that officers work as a coordinated network, and that Information Point (IP) staff and Members receive in a timely and user friendly manner the information to which they are entitled in law and which they require to carry out their jobs.</p>	<p>Head of Information appointment required enable the work on some of the recommendations to begin,</p>	<p>The Chief Executive to appoint the Head of IM, which it is recognised may not be a new post.</p>	<p>Peter Gilroy</p>
<p>R2. It is recommended that to address the complex nature of Member Information, a collaborative Management Board for the Information Point be set up - comprising a Member from each political party, the Head of Democratic Services & Local Leadership and a library manager.</p>	<p>The IMG Members agreed to be involved in the Board, John Davies will need to stand down in summer, and Alex King will appoint John's replacement, who is welcome to join the Board at any point.</p>	<p>Organise inaugural meeting of the Management Board.</p>	<p>Paul Wickenden</p>
<p>Staff within the Information Point should ideally be dedicated posts and the unit be positioned as a corporate resource. A Service Level Agreement should therefore be put in place between the Chief Executive and the Libraries Service to ensure continuity of existing training, library resources and tolls (i.e. use of the public library catalogue and all library databases and subscriptions), currently used, can be accessed by the Information Point staff.</p>	<p>Management Board membership: John Davies, Trudy Dean, Ray Parker, Paul Wickenden, Peter Welsh, Christel Pobgee</p>		
<p>R3. An urgent audit of staff engaged in Information Management across the authority be carried out, and duplication of processes and output be eliminated.</p>	<p>Head of Information is guardian of information. Information must be seen as a corporate resource not just for the select few.</p>	<p>Head of IM to project manage urgent audit</p>	<p>Peter Welsh, assisted by Edward Thomas, Carol Patrick and Christel Pobgee</p>
<p>R4. Time released by eliminating duplication is invested in increased analysis, archiving and proactive reporting of information to assist Members.</p>	<p>This recommendation is tied to R.3. IMG found too much gathering and not enough using. Information is disjointed and needs to be better packaged.</p>	<p>Action: As R.3</p>	<p>Peter Welsh, assisted by Edward Thomas</p> <p>Analysis: Debra Exall with Peter Welsh</p>

	<p>Assumption made by IMG by removing duplication provides officer time for proactive work. Need to be clear freeing officer time is not the same as freeing up skills.</p> <p>KCC needs a good knowledge management system – KCC's is not fit for purpose as primarily a content management system. There is currently an information gathering exercise re: KCC websites / design and raised implication of additional budget implications.</p> <p>Kent View will have built into the design Members base – discussions continue next week.</p>		<p>Archiving: Christel Pobgee</p> <p>Proactive reporting of information: Christel Pobgee/ Directorate, Cabinet and Leaders Staff Officers</p> <p>Peter Welsh</p>
<p>R5. Members' induction should encompass the rights of Members to information, and the services available at the Information Point in depth, and interviews with each Member arranged to determine their needs, with the option for Members to review their needs at least every six months.</p>	<p>Discussion on the inconstancy of some Members and officers knowledge, <u>all</u> Members are entitled to all KCC information. Members are aware of issues of sensitivities i.e. commercially sensitive information, but this should not preclude provision of information as there is evidence it is used to withhold information Members have a legal right to.</p>	<p>Members Right to Information and their responsibilities regarding the use of information must be embedded in Members Induction and training manuals</p>	<p>Peter Sass, assisted by Coral Ingleton & Christel Pobgee</p>
	<p>Agreed recommendations 12 & 13 were linked and would be worked on as part of R.5 i.e. linkage to R.12 needs a constant message.</p>	<p>Information Point plan to pilot interviews with current Members.</p>	<p>Christel Pobgee, assisted by Peter Sass (or Democratic Services nominee)</p>
	<p>Member Interviews – jointly via Information Point and Personnel (Training). Planned interviews will be offered after member Induction, as in theory all Members will be on the same level, and at 6 monthly intervals.</p>	<p>Members to be part of the training provided to Officers on provision of information to and the role of Members</p>	<p>Coral Ingleton</p>
	<p>All Officers to be trained with regard to providing information to Members and the role of Members.</p>		

<p>R6. A Local Member Notification Protocol to be developed, and electronic alerts introduced to systems, indicating when Members need to be consulted and informed and by whom, with current contact details.</p>	<p>Protocol in providing information to local members i.e. events in their patch does exist but is not universally applied. Should be a stage of event arrangements, that it cannot proceed unless the local Member(s) have been notified appropriately. Peter Gilroy has stated events will be cancelled if there is not the appropriate timely notification to Members. Needs to be a tick box on Event database re: notification of Members.</p>	<p>Set up electronic alerts and system so staff reminded of protocol and receive alert to notify.</p>	<p>Peter Welsh assisted by Peter Sass, Carol Patrick, Jane Clarke & Tracey Gleeson</p>
<p>R7. A Members' Focus Group be set up to produce a list of information members require continuously 'on tap' on their Members' database</p>	<p>A selection of Members had initial brainstorm session to produce a list of information Members require 'on tap'. Details are in appendices of IMG report.</p>	<p>Head of IM to set up Focus Group with Members to work on the 'on tap' database and Information Portal</p>	<p>Peter Welsh assisted by Peter Sass, Carol Patrick & Tracey Gleeson</p>
<p>An Information Protocol is prepared which sets out contact details for named individuals within the Directorates who are responsible for providing and updating this information, and sets out how their work fits in with the work of the Information Point</p>	<p>Need a descriptive directory of contacts, as often titles are meaningless. Currently information is owned by individuals, should be owned by the Authority. These ties in with the Knet revamp which will offer a long-term solution, but need a quick fix solution for post elections in June. This links with R.3. Audit as will need officer commitment to keep undated and accurate.</p>	<p>Members to consult their political Groups to nominate for Members' Focus Group</p> <p>Draft information protocol which sets out named individuals responsible for information within the directorates.</p>	<p>Trudy Dean, John Davies & Ray Parker</p> <p>Edward Thomas</p>
<p>R8. An electronic Members' 'portal' or dashboard be developed to give easy access to the information requested in R7. The portal should be trialled by the Members' Focus Group to ensure it meets Members' needs.</p>	<p>Discussed with terms of R.7</p>	<p>Develop electronic Members' 'portal' or dashboard be to give easy access to the information</p>	<p>Peter Sass assisted by Peter Welsh, Carol Patrick, Jane Clarke & Member's Focus Group</p>
<p>R9. Where researchers work is heavily relied on in published reports, they should be named on the publication to recognise their work.</p>	<p>Flagged a shoddy attitude to referencing information used within pieces of work.</p>	<p>Publication of reports</p> <p>Referencing</p>	<p>Peter Sass</p> <p>Peter Welsh</p>
<p>R10. We believe a system such as we describe would be of value to colleagues in other Kent authorities and that a subscription service should be marketed.</p>	<p>KCC has tried to initiate subscription services with partners – key issue has always been the funding. Kent Partnership has an information sharing protocol re crime, duty to do so. Key issue, not the funding but sensitivity of information/</p>	<p>Work will be incremental and best fit initially</p> <p>Leader/CEO to raise at meetings at joint CEO & Leaders meetings. Member Reps to raise at meetings with Police</p>	<p>Peter Welsh assisted by Christel Pobgee</p> <p>Paul Carter & Peter Gilroy</p>

	power base.	and Fire.	
R11. Consideration should be given to enabling details of KCC (and partner) establishments to be entered onto Tom Tom or a similar guidance system.	BlackBerry capable of providing information from services.	To be actioned and advise Members re: BlackBerry	Carol Patrick assisted by Ollie Jackson
R12. Member training should include [soft] research skills, and the use of electronic tools to enhance their effectiveness and information exchange with residents.	see R.5		Peter Sass assisted by Christel Pobgee & Coral Ingleton
R13. All Member training sessions be recorded, put on the portal, and marketed.	See R.5 Have to crack this one, approached Kent TV too expensive. Virtual presenter may be a way forward.	Members training sessions to be recorded, loaded onto Members Portal and marketed.	Peter Sass assisted by Christel Pobgee & Coral Ingleton
R14. KNet be improved, with easier navigation, an improved search engine, and regular updating of information.	KCC intranet and website revamp has been approved and funded	Keep Group updated on progress	Peter Welsh, assisted by Tracey Gleeson & Carol Patrick
R15. The Kent Partnership Board be encouraged as a matter of urgency to progress work on sharing of information and use of compatible systems to facilitate this	Kent Partnership has an information sharing protocol re crime, duty to do so. Key issue, not the funding but sensitivity of information / power base.		Peter Welsh assisted by Carol Patrick & Christel Pobgee
R16. This IMG or a successor body be charged with driving through the actions agreed from this report, and that quarterly reports on progress are presented to the Selection and Member Services Committee	This Group of Members and Officers is the successor body. Report expected at the Selection & Members Services Committee 30.03.09. This Group to meet 2-weeks prior to the Committee meeting to update on progress.	Lib Dem Office to arrange meeting	Jude Sage
	NB: Wrong date given of the next Selection and Members Services Committee meeting.	Selection and Members Services Committee meeting maybe rearranged or additional meeting agreed.	Paul Wickenden

DRAFT
Members Induction and Training Programme

Subject	Location	Date	Duration
Time Management	Maidstone	Thurs 05/03/09	½ day (pm)
Business Writing Skills	Maidstone	Wed 18/03/2009	½ day (pm)
Participatory Budgeting Workshop		Thurs 23/04/2009	(pm)
General Induction Day		Tues 09/06/2009	
KCC Road Trip		Wed 10/06/2009	
Overview & Scrutiny Induction		Thurs 11/06/2009	½ day (pm)
Standards Committee: The Role of the Members and the Ethical Framework (two sessions)		Fri 12/06/2009	9.30 – 12.30 1.30 – 4.30
KCC Road Trip	Various	Mon 15/06/2009	
KCC Road Trip		Tues 16/06/2009	
Democratic Services and Local Leadership “Showcase”		Wed 17/06/2009	
Procedural Rules for Council and Committee Meetings (two sessions)		Thurs 18/06/2009	9:30-12:30 1:30-4:30
Procedural Rules for Council and Committee Meetings (two sessions)		Fri 19/06/2009	9:30-12:30 1:30-4:30
KCC Road Trip		Tues 23/06/2009	
KCC Road Trip		Fri 23/06/2009	
Planning Applications Committee		Mon 29/06/2009	
Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee		Tues 30/06/2009	(pm)
Chairmanship Skills		Wed 01/07/2009	(pm)
Scrutiny and Questioning Techniques		Thurs 02/07/2009	(am)
Webinars x 4	At any computer	Thurs 02/07/2009	1 day

Localism Team Induction		Mon 06/07/2009	(pm)
Standards Committee: The Role of Members and the Ethical Framework		Mon 20/07/2009	(pm)
Participatory Budgeting Workshop		Tues 21/07/2009	(pm)
Standards Committee: The Role of Members and the Ethical Framework (two sessions)		Fri 24/07/2009	9.30 – 12.30 1.30 – 4.30
Local Government Law	Maidstone	Thurs 06/08/2009	1 day
Webinars x 4	At any computer	Mon 10/08/2009	1 day
Business Writing/Time Management	Maidstone	Wed 12/08/2009	1 day
Diversity and Equalities	Maidstone	Wed 19/08/2009	1 day
Local Government Law	Maidstone	Fri 21/08/2009	1 day
Effective Reading Techniques	Maidstone	Mon 24/08/2009	1 day
Voice of Influence	Maidstone	Wed 26/08/2009	1 day
Diversity and Equalities	Maidstone	Mon 07/09/2009	1 day
Media Training	Maidstone	Wed 09/09/2009	1 day
Chairmanship Skills		Wed 09/09/2009	(pm)
Scrutiny and Questioning Techniques		Fri 11/09/2009	(pm)
Scrutiny and Questioning Techniques		Tues 15/09/2009	(pm)
Time Management/Business Writing	Maidstone	Thurs 01/09/2009	1 day
Effective Reading Techniques	Maidstone	Tues 13/09/2009	1 day
Voice of Influence	Maidstone	Thurs 22/10/2009	1 day
Media Training	Maidstone	Wed 18/11/2009	1 day