

<b>Bath &amp; North East Somerset Council</b>			
MEETING:	Resources Overview & Scrutiny Panel		
MEETING DATE:	5 <sup>th</sup> February 2007	AGENDA ITEM NUMBER	
TITLE:	<b>Implementation of Member Services O&amp;S Review</b>		
WARD:	ALL		
<b>AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM</b>			
<b>List of attachments to this report:</b>			
<a href="#">Appendix 1</a> - O&S Member Services Review Recommendations R1 to R25 approved by Council 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2006			

## 1 THE ISSUE

1.1 The Council at its meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November received and approved this Panel's report on its Review of Member Services and asked the Panel to review progress on the implementation of the recommendations by March 2007. This report is brought forward at the request of the Panel Chair to enable that review to be undertaken. Progress on the recommendations is set out in section 7 of this report.

## 2 RECOMMENDATION

The Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel is asked to:

2.1 Note the progress made and the proposals for further action as outlined.

2.2 Identify and/or comment on any issues which the Panel wishes to be explored further.

## 3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 The delivery of the 2007 Member Induction and Development Programme depends upon sufficient financial provision being made in the Council's 2007/08 Budget. In 2006/07 that budget was significantly reduced as a one-year option of identifying savings on the basis that it would be restored to its previous level to enable the Member Induction and Development Programme to be delivered. The final outcome awaits the approval on 20<sup>th</sup> February 2007 by full Council of the 2007/08 Budget.


3.2 Some of the new areas of support for Councillors identified in the O&S review may require funding to be reallocated from other budget headings either within the Member Development Programme or other


funding streams to enable them to be implemented. Examples include - the creation of Personal Development Plans for Councillors; the provision of crèche facilities; increased use of video conferencing and wireless connections for remote devices; giving Councillors access to the Council's Geographical Information System.

3.3 A bid for joint funding for a Councillor Development Programme has been submitted by the four unitary authorities in the sub-region to the LIFT South West capacity building fund promoted by Government Office and the Regional Assembly. The results are currently awaited.

## 4 COMMUNITY STRATEGY OUTCOMES

4.1 The key Community Strategy ambitions relevant to the implementation of this O&S review are:

 Be creative - working together and finding new ways of doing things

 Be distinctive - promoting a sense of place so people identify with and take pride in our communities

## 5 CORPORATE IMPROVEMENT PRIORITIES

5.1 The key Corporate Plan improvement priority relevant to the implementation of this O&S review is: Improving customer satisfaction.

5.2 Effective involvement of Councillors in the Council's governance arrangements is essential to the efficient and effective delivery of the Corporate Improvement Priorities.

## 6 CPA KEY LINES OF ENQUIRY

6.1 The key CPA lines of enquiry relevant to the implementation of this O&S review are:

<i>Ambition for the community - i.e. What the Council, together with its partners, is trying to achieve</i>	Improved support for Councillors will enable them to focus more effectively on community priorities
<i>Prioritisation of ambitions</i>	Improved support will enable Councillors to contribute even more to the corporate prioritisation of ambitions
<i>Increasing capacity of the Council to deliver ambition for the community to ensure we achieve what we say we will</i>	The strengthening of support for Councillors in their Ward and local governance roles will play a key part in enabling them to contribute to building capacity in particular under the stronger communities

6.2 The report issued following the Corporate Peer Review in September 2006 commented on Member Development as follows: "To further build the capacity of the Council and maximise the talent of Members, consideration should be given to increasing the resourcing, focus, role of Members as advocates of the Council, and the profile of member development. The peer review team wished to clarify that this was not about increasing member allowances, but rather about maximising the potential of Members through investing in their development, for example through:

- (1) The adoption of personal development plans for all Members;
- (2) Maintaining a register of courses attended by all Members;
- (3) Attendance of executive and other leading Members at the IDeA Leadership Academy;
- (4) Ensuring that all Members participate in Section 17 training with regard to the Crime and Disorder Act;
- (5) Ensuring a comprehensive approach to induction following the forthcoming local elections in May 2007.<sup>94</sup>

6.3 The Corporate Peer Review report also highlighted other areas for the development of Member roles as follows:

- (1) Members taking a more proactive role in leading and championing performance management;
- (2) Maintaining and increasing the pace of change throughout the organisation and ensuring that this is owned by all Members and staff and that the reasons for change and the pace of change are understood;
- (3) Increasing support and Member Development to the Ward Councillor as community leader;
- (4) The neighbourhood agenda and what this means to residents and its implications for the Ward Councillor as community leader;
- (5) A need for the Council to be able to provide further evidence of engagement with disadvantaged groups, promoting social inclusion and demonstrating that consultation exercises are fully representative.

## **7 PROGRESS ON THE O&S REVIEW RECOMMENDATIONS (R1 TO R25)**

## **7.1 R1 - DEVELOPING LINKS WITH OTHER CORPORATE INITIATIVES**

7.2 The Democratic Services Manager is continuing discussions with colleagues in the Improvement and Performance Team covering Culture Change, Communications and Marketing and Corporate Human Resources; the Customer Access/Relationship Management Programme; Worksmart; and the IT Partnership. They are contributing to the work outlined below. The Democratic Services Manager has reported to the Culture Change Programme Member/Officer Working Party on this review.

## **7.3 R2 TO R6 - IMPROVING COMMUNICATIONS BETWEEN OFFICERS AND COUNCILLORS**

7.4 The Communications and Marketing Team are working to produce Corporate Communications Standards and Guidelines and these recommendations will be incorporated. This work is due for completion in Spring/Summer 2007.

## **7.5 R7 TO R13 - IMPROVING TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT FOR COUNCILLORS**

(1) A comprehensive induction and ongoing Member Development programme for after the 2007 election onwards is being prepared. Training will be offered in two different slots (daytime and evening), subject to sufficient take-up, to accommodate the diverse availabilities of elected Members.

(2) Phase 1 the Induction Programme. This will be geared primarily to the needs of newly-elected Members who have not previously served but will be open to all Councillors as returning Members may wish to have a refresher. There will be some new elements in which all Councillors will require update training e.g. the Crime and Disorder Act Section 17 training; scrutiny of partnership bodies; risk management from the Councillor's perspective; the current position on how the Council works with key statutory partners such as the PCT and the Police.

(3) Phase 2 Specific Skills Training. This will be tailored to particular Member roles e.g. Executive decision-making; O&S Panel Chairing and membership; Regulatory Committee membership/chairing etc.

(4) Phase 3 General Skills Training. This will be offered on such generic aspects as chairing of meetings, media handling etc.

(5) Phase 4 Training relating to Ward Work. This is a new area and will cover the role of the LSP/LAAs; accessing information on the GIS; accessing area-based services in planning, highways etc; personal safety for councillors.

(6) Ongoing Member Development. This will continue to provide opportunities for Councillors to participate in the IDeA Leadership Academy; the BTech in Local Governance; and other appropriate training courses. It is proposed to link the work on Councillors Personal Development Plans and Job Profiles to this ongoing development work.

## **7.6 R14 TO R21 - IMPROVED SUPPORT FOR COUNCILLORS**

7.7 The options for offering support to Councillors with child care commitments suggested in R14, R15 and R16 are being investigated in conjunction with the Assistant Director Environmental Services and the Head of Children and Families Services.

7.8 The options for improving the IT support offered to Councillors suggested in R17 and R18 are being investigated in conjunction with the Assistant Director of Finance and the Head of Policy and Partnerships.

7.9 Democratic Services is reviewing the provision of information to Members after the election with the aim of addressing the points made in R19. Improvements to the website to collate information relevant to Councillors in a more accessible format as suggested in R20 are being considered by the Communications and Marketing Team. Any detailed work will need to await the overall redesign of the site which is currently under way.

7.10 Democratic Services will pursue arrangements for an annual Member Development Forum as suggested in R21 in conjunction with the political group training officers.

## **7.11 R22 TO 25 - WARD SUPPORT**

7.12 The Human Resources Team is redesigning the employee induction course and is aware of the need to include Councillor input (R22).

7.13 Improvements to Council systems needed to make more Ward-based information available to Councillors, as outlined in R23 to R25, are being considered by the Improvement and Performance Team and the officers leading on the Customer Access/Relationship Management Programme.

## **8 RISK MANAGEMENT**

8.1 A risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations has been undertaken, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

## **9 CONSULTATION**

9.1 Consultation on the issues covered by this report has taken place with the officers in the Services referred to in the report.

## 10 ADVICE SOUGHT

10.1 The Solicitor to the Council has had the opportunity to input to this report and has cleared it for publication.

<b>Contact person</b>	<i>Tom Dunne, Democratic Services Manager (Council and Member Services) (01225 394360)</i>
<b>Background papers</b>	<i>O&amp;S Review of Member Services report to Council - 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2006</i>
<b>Please contact the report author if you need to access this report in an alternative format</b>	