



LONDON BOROUGH OF HILLINGDON

Role of Community Councillors

Report of

Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee : 2003/2004

Members of the Committee

Councillor Richard Lewis (Chairman)
Councillor Bruce Baker (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ann Banks
Councillor Steve Carey
Councillor Paul Harmsworth
Councillor Phoday Jarjussey
Councillor Mike Usher



Role of Community Councillors

Chairman's Foreword

Since being elected to the Council 2 years ago I have been reminded again and again of how much local Councillors do to serve their constituents. Different Councillors have different strengths and choose to serve in different ways – but overall there is a tremendous commitment and willingness to engage with local people and issues.

The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of the community role of Councillors has sought to both reflect the wide variety of work undertaken by Councillors, and to identify ways in which elected members can be better supported to undertake this.

The review has come up with many recommendations reflecting the range of issues considered. For ease of understanding they have been gathered together under the following headings :

- Better communication with Councillors
- Raising the profile of Councillors
- Supporting Councillor casework
- Member training
- Member induction
- Members advocating for the community
- Information for members

I want to commend this review to not only existing Councillors, but also to those who in the local community who may wish to stand as Councillors.

Moreover, I wish to pay tribute to all those members of the local community who work so hard in many different formal and informal ways. The work of Councillors can never replace this, but hopefully through the work of this review, elected Councillors will be better able to support their local communities.

The image contains two elements: on the left, a handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Richard Lewis." with a long horizontal flourish underneath; on the right, a small, square, color portrait photograph of a man with dark hair, wearing a dark suit jacket, a white shirt, and a dark tie.

Councillor Richard Lewis

Summary

Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified the role of Councillors within the wider community – as opposed to their executive and Committee roles within the local authority – as a key area where members are active, yet often not formally supported by the authority.

This review has sought to investigate models of good practice elsewhere, allow members to share their own experience and explore ways of formalising and developing a range of measures that can support Councillors in their community roles.

Recommendations

The recommendations arising from the review have been grouped into seven areas and are set out in full below.

Better Communication with Councillors

- Ward walks with officers from Environment & Hillingdon Homes / key partners (eg police)
- Develop a checklist to use on ward walks, with reporting mechanisms to get action and regular monitoring

Raising the Profile of Councillors

- Posters – to be placed in Council facilities (eg Area Housing Offices), and be available to Councillors to circulate more widely
- Enhanced website information – including street name / postcode link to ward information
- Agree member job descriptions
- Hillingdon People to have regular feature on work of ward Councillors (there would be a need to be aware of political balance criteria)
- Identify 4 themes a year which the Council will consult the public on – and provide advance information on this to Councillors who could deal with constituent queries and provide feedback to the Council on local reactions.

Supporting Councillor Casework

- The member enquiry system: to be quality monitored every 6 months and results fed through to Party Leaders
- Approaches to be made to key partners (eg Primary Care Trust, police) requesting they identify a core contact point for Councillor enquiries, and agree a response time for them
- That when a query is acknowledged members should be given the name of a contact officer who would be responsible for dealing with the query as well as a reference number

Member Training

- Revisit the system of 'all member seminars'
- Develop proposals for a comprehensive member development programme, including focused training packages reflecting different needs
- Conduct an annual review of member training : what has been provided, the take-up and feedback forms

- Regular GIS (Geographic Information System) briefings / trainings

Member Induction

- Fewer, but longer sessions
- Introduce 'buddy' system for first 3 months of Councillor on Committee, to be provided within the political Group
- To consider formalising induction support from officers – including identifying officers who could be available to help Councillors find their way around the Council bureaucracy – named support officers
- New Councillor briefing on issues facing / faced by Council
- In 2006 run a similar range of courses as in 2002, including using external facilitators, to be more spread across the year

Members Advocating for the Community

- Welcome Police 'Safer Neighbourhood Policing' initiative
- Member training in using media and pressure groups to achieve change within the local area
- The Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) process to identify / create new ways for ward members to engage within the community planning process
- Endorse an expansion of the 'StreetWarden' scheme across the Borough, as a way of empowering local communities
- Community Study Days – chance for ward members to inform officers of major issues facing their communities – members teaching officers.

Information for Members

- Key partner contact points (see Supporting Councillor Casework)
- Provide ward members with earlier notification of plans etc
- Provide inspection reports (eg Ofsted and SSI (Social Services Inspectorate)) on local facilities to ward
- Publicise ward based information on the Council internet - 'Facts and Figures'
- Support the work being done to compile profiles for each ward based on census information.
- Regular (monthly?) bulletin on Council matters – short
- The Information Protocol for Councillors be expanded to provide guidelines on when and how to contact Councillors on ward matters and Borough wide matters

Setting the Review Scope

Councillors have always undertaken a significant role in the community – both as individuals and on behalf of the Council. As part of the move to an executive system of decision making and in recognition of the 'well-being' powers within the Local Government Act 2000 the Council has been looking at how best to support and enhance this role. This was addressed by the Modernisation of the Council Working Party before the executive system was introduced (see Appendix 1 for a summary of its decisions and actions arising from them), and subsequently within the Best Value review of Democratic Services (see Appendix 2 for the comments related to the role of community Councillors).

An example of the range of activities undertaken by many Councillors is set out in the following table.

What Councillors do in their Communities

- 60% of Councillors are school governors
- 42% of Councillors sit on other public bodies
- 57% of Councillors are involved in voluntary work

(quoted on the Local Government Association website (The Role of Councillors in Neighbourhood Management))

The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee sought to build upon these foundations and external good practice – with two main initial objectives :

- express what a community Councillor should do
 - within the London Borough of Hillingdon
 - within his/her ward
 - within the wider community
- identify the resources required to effectively support the community Councillor role

At the outset of the review the Committee reviewed the results of a number of surveys which gave an insight into how the general public viewed local Councillors and their work.

Public Lack of Awareness of Local Councillors

- 82% of London voters have never met their local Councillor
- 76% of London voters cannot name any of their current Councillors
- 80% of 15-24 year olds nationally cannot name any of their current Councillors
- only 13% of London voters would consider going to a Councillor for advice – even on core Local Government issues
- 61% of voters would be “more likely to vote in local elections” if they had more information about who their candidate is, and what their views are

(MORI, April 2002)

Public Views on What Councillors Should Do

- 56% of the public believed Councillors should ‘listen to the views of local people’
- 56% of the public believed Councillors should ‘address issues concerning the whole area’
- 15% of the public though local Councillors should ‘attend Council meetings’

(MORI, cited in 'Why Politics Needs Marketing, Roger Mortimore, paper for political marketing conference, University of Aberdeen)

The above MORI surveys were supplemented with the results of questions asked of the Citizen's Panel as part of the Best Value Review into Democratic Services. The panel is not necessarily representative of the public at large as its membership is largely self-selecting and comes from people who are likely to have more knowledge of the Borough. However, it did provide a cross section of the borough based on age, ethnicity, gender and location. 1,045 questionnaires were sent out and a response rate of 46% achieved. The key results are set out below.

- | |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 47% knew their local Councillor• 52% knew how to contact their local Councillor• 15% had contacted a Councillor in the past year |
|--|

These figures (particularly the MORI figures) tallied with reported experiences of the Councillors on the Committee, and led to the Committee identifying another focus for its review – how best to raise the profile of Councillors within the community.

National Good Practice

Members of the Committee researched a number of examples of good practice, including the IdeA website's community leadership section, which identified the following factors that are necessary for Councillors to

The IdeA Knowledge website identifies the following characteristics of effective community leadership :

- listening to and involving local communities
- building vision and direction
- working effectively in partnerships
- making things happen
- standing up for communities
- empowering local communities
- accountability to communities
- using community resources effectively

These are goals which the Council aspires to, but which some local Councillors already embody. The challenge is to resource and empower more local Councillors to undertake these roles, and to engage their activism alongside Council activities.

The LGA Real Roles for Members' (2000) identified 4 key elements to the community members champion role:

- Signposting – community members know how the system works and who to contact. They are well placed to advise local people about local issues and can point people in the right direction

- Monitoring – community members can help local people make progress by overseeing and intervening on their behalf
- Acting as an advocate – community members have the necessary status, skills and abilities to tackle failure. When things break down or go wrong, community members as elected representatives are well placed to intervene and seek redress on behalf on local people
- Representing – community members can spot emerging issues and trends. They will know when a series of individual issues indicates that there is a real failure in the system that needs to be taken up by the Council itself and they can feed views into the local authority.

Methodology / Key Issues

As outlined the Committee began its work by reviewing work already undertaken on this issue both within the Council and beyond. Following this desktop exercise the Committee discussed the various experiences of the members, and the strengths and weaknesses of the current situation as they saw it. It recognised that many members spend a great deal of time working in the community, both in their role as elected Councillors and in connection with other organisations and issues they are involved with. It then commissioned a number of pieces of additional evidence, which are briefly summarised below :

Questionnaire – a questionnaire appeared in Hillingdon People asking local residents which key roles they would want their Councillors to undertake.

The results are set out below, out of a total response of 33.

What are the key roles you want your councillor to undertake for you?

Getting council action on neighbourhood problems	28
Meeting with local community groups / leaders	07
Reporting complaints / problems to the council on your behalf	25
Holding advice surgeries	14
Representing your views to other councillors / other bodies on decisions to be made	18
Speaking in support of petitions organised by local people	14
Taking up local problems with other agencies (e.g. police)	26
Organising surveys of local opinion	08
Keeping residents informed by the production of newsletters	13
Organising local campaigns	03

The three roles that were clearly identified as most important to respondents were :

- Getting Council action on neighbourhood problems
- Reporting complaints / problems to the Council on your behalf
- Taking up local problems with other agencies (eg police)

This clearly indicated a desire to see community Councillors acting as advocates on their behalf – getting problems resolved, regardless of who was the responsible body.

The Committee also sent a copy of the questionnaire to each of the local Members of Parliament. This reflected the involvement MP's have with community issues and the fact that many members of the public do not understand which matters affect national government and which local government. A response was received from John Wilkinson MP, who highlighted the following five roles :

- Getting Council action on neighbourhood problems
- Reporting complaints / problems
- Holding advice surgeries
- Representing your views to other councillors/bodies
- Taking up problems with other agencies

Member Induction

Members reviewed the induction programme for all new Councillors run in May 2002 and considered the best practice guidance issued by the *LgiU* . This induction programme consisted of both written information (about 1 centimetre thick, plus additional papers from Departments) and training courses. 12 of these were designed specifically for newly elected Councillors with the remaining 10 being open to both newly elected and returning Councillors. The majority were commissioned from the Association of London Government and were delivered by former leading Councillors from all parties with experience of the issues that affect members. Leading Councillors (Cabinet members and 2 members from each of the opposition parties) were also given places on the IDeA 'London Programme – a training / networking opportunity run across all London Boroughs.

Commissioning external induction training for members in 2002/2003 cost £11,000, plus officer time, accommodation and other related costs. A copy of the induction training package is attached at Appendix 3, which also includes training provided in-house by officers. Of particular relevance to this review were the 12 sessions provided on the community Councillor role, which looked at the following 4 issues :

- Getting answers – explaining the system and providing support in getting meaningful answers to their questions, and addressing potentially unrealistic expectations
- Dangers – explaining the limits of their roles, potential difficulties when working closely with constituents, role of Standards Committee, declarations, what to do if offered bribes etc

- Budgets and Service Delivery – explaining how the Council draws up its budget, the constraints faced in service delivery and how members are involved in budget setting
- Partnership in the Community – how the Council works with others to develop / deliver services, how members can be involved.

A common concern raised by new Councillors was the amount of time they had to commit to attend all the training provided, and many felt unable to do so. An option to consider for future years could be running member training events over entire days – allowing the same amount of material to be covered as could be over 3 evenings.

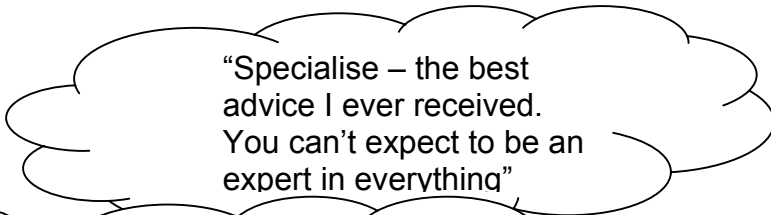
In addition to the induction training provided the Council has committed to running all member seminars through out the year to keep members informed of key issues facing the Council.

One idea to improve induction for new members was to provide a briefing on major issues currently affecting the Borough and those recently resolved. This would reduce the chances of encountering an irate constituent who knew more about a recent Council policy change than the new Councillor.

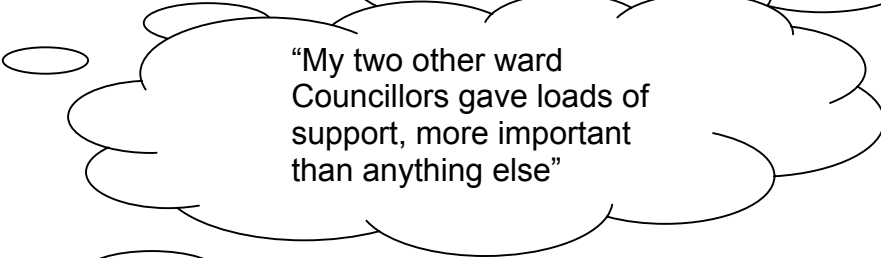
An initiative to support newly elected Councillors that could be considered would be introduction of a system of either mentors or buddies. Mentoring would provide a formal system for supporting new Councillors with clearly set out objectives for the new Councillors to meet. To meet best practice any mentors would be provided with a one day training course. A less formalistic approach would be that of 'buddy', where a new Councillor would be allocated someone who would explain the geography of the Civic Centre and be available if problems crop up. Either system would allow new Councillors to better integrate into the Civic Centre, and hopefully would result in all new Councillors being confident working within the Civic Centre environment – regardless of party, background and level of political experience.

The Committee recommended that a buddy system be developed within each Party Group, with training being provided to the buddies before the election. It was also felt that clearer guidance should be given to new Councillors on the roles of officers, and the sort of support they should expect both from the Party Secretariat staff, from the Cabinet and Scrutiny teams as well as the wider officer body.

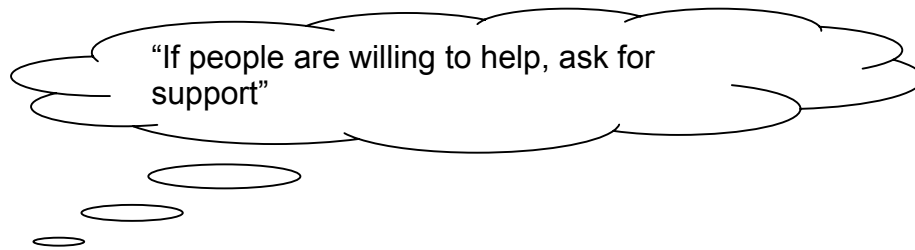
Advice for new Councillors given by more experienced Councillors on the Committee included :



“Specialise – the best advice I ever received. You can’t expect to be an expert in everything”



“My two other ward Councillors gave loads of support, more important than anything else”



Member Induction – Comments on Role of Community Councillor

As part of the member induction programme 2002 there were 3 workshops held on being a 'Community Councillor'. Feedback from these workshops was compiled, presented to Whips Committee and fed into the Best Value Review of Democratic Services. A number of the suggestions have been implemented and others were enhancements to services that formed part of the Best Value review recommendations, not all of which were accepted by Cabinet. Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee reviewed all the comments, which are set out below :

- Local organisations – all members of the Council should be informed of how to find details of local organisations in their ward in the libraries information system
- "Walkabouts" – Councillors should carry out occasional "walkabouts" within their wards and officers from relevant departments such as Environmental Services and Housing Services should be made available to accompany them
- information to all members of the Council – officers should be reminded of the needs always to consider sending information on major issues such as the Comprehensive Performance Assessment to all members of the Council.
- Inspection reports – relevant departments should consider sending information on inspections of particular establishments to ward Councillors, especially in there are likely to be local reactions, as in the case of OfSTED reports on schools
- Statistical data about wards – all members of the Council should be informed of the usefulness of the website – www.statistics.gov.uk/neighbourhood for gathering information about their wards
- Geographical Information System (GIS) – presentations should be arranged for Councillors on the information available on the Council's GIS.
- Ward surgeries – ward surgeries should be advertised on the local community notice boards and also in Hillingdon People
- Hillingdon People – information on the work of ward Councillors should be featured in Hillingdon People on a regular basis taking account of the need to achieve party balance
- Invitations to Local Events – invitations to events such as opening ceremonies should include the local ward Councillors

- Annual ward review – consideration should be given to an annual review meeting for ward Councillors to meet appropriate senior officers to discuss the major issues in each ward.

Raising the profile of Councillors locally

There is already a lot of work undertaken by Councillors within their wards, which the Committee recognised and appreciated. An example is the commitment members make to running surgeries. There was discussion about the value of varying the location of these, with the aim of reaching a more diverse audience, but on balance the Committee felt the advantages of committing to a regular venue which was known and widely publicised outweighed the advantages of using a variety of locations.

In addition to recommending these key roles for all members the Committee also identified that Councillors are a key resource for communicating with the local authority. This is ideally a 2 way process – members are aware of issues facing the Council and wider community and can therefore explain initiatives / problems the Council is addressing, as well as being a key doorway for members of the community to feed into the Council. Many members are also involved in other community organisations / events and therefore have a greater variety of community skills and knowledge that they bring to both the Council and groups they support.

The Committee considered various initiatives that could raise the profile of Councillors locally – with the aim of encouraging people to use the experience and local knowledge of their Councillors. These included production of posters that members could put up within their wards giving details of Councillors and contact details. Another idea was contacting new residents (who could possibly be identified when they registered for Council Tax) with information about the Council, local area and their Councillors. Such a local information pack could also be provided in libraries, sports centres etc. While recognising that there was already information on the Council's Internet site (www.hillingdon.gov.uk) about ward members it was suggested that this could be enhanced by a facility to enter a post code or street name and identify ward and Councillor information in that way.

It was also recognised that members could be valuable sources of information for their constituents on major issues facing their wards – and they were currently inadequately supported with information about this. An initiative that could support them in this (without overburdening Councillors with additional information) would be to identify 4 themes to be addressed during a year. These would reflect local concerns and be interesting. Members could receive targeted information on these matters – both written and through presentations. Ideally these could be coincided with any action the Council or other party was taking – so members were aware and would have a chance to raise issues with officers.

Enhancing the Decision making role of members in Council

Recognising that members have responsibilities to represent their ward within the authority as well as beyond the Committee looked at how community Councillors can operate within the Council's political sphere.

The constitution states that full Council "Acts as a forum where all members can meet on a regular basis, act as a focus for the authority, discuss and debate issues of importance to the Borough and decide the Authority's budgetary and policy framework." (page 9) In that way they 'are collectively the ultimate policy-makers and carry out a number of strategic and corporate management functions' (page 5). A number of authorities have experimented with engaging full Council meetings with community issues. For example Professor John Stewart (*A Role for all members*, LGA 2000, quoted in '*Real Roles for New Members – the role of non-executive members in the new structures*', LGA, December 2000) suggested that every year the Council should hold a state of the Borough debate to focus on the key issues faced not by the authority but by the area and communities within. Wakefield Metropolitan Borough Council allowed ward Councillors five minutes to give a presentation or raise issues of local concern at Council meetings (the Hillingdon member question time is similar, but can include matters of purely internal local authority concern).

Community Councillor - Job Descriptions / Key Roles

The Committee agreed that it was important to quantify what a Councillor should do. This was not only important in terms of developing effective support systems for Councillors, but so constituents could hold members to account, and inform prospective candidates for election of the issues they would be facing. Rather than calling such a document a 'job description', which it was felt was a limiting term, it was agreed they should be called member key roles.

Job descriptions from around the United Kingdom were sought, as well as comments from the major political parties and various national Assemblies. In the end the Committee considered job descriptions from 5 authorities, the Scottish Assembly and the Labour Party (which was the only national political party to specify local authority member roles on their public website). Members also looked at the Council's constitution which sets out in Article 2 – Key Roles for all Councillors. Taking all this information into account, and considering local circumstances the Committee considered that the roles as set out in the constitution provided the best basis for developing a job description for Councillors. However, it was felt that it needed to be made more accessible, and it therefore agreed the following key roles for members, based upon Article 2.

Key Roles

1. Councillors - together are the Council's ultimate policy-makers – setting the budget and agreeing key policies

2. Councillors – should effectively represent the interests of their ward
3. Councillors – should effectively represent the interests of their individual constituents
4. Councillors - need to listen and respond to their constituents questions and problems
5. Councillors - should take part in ensuring the Council operates effectively
6. Councillors - should be willing to represent the Council on outside organisations
7. Councillors -should maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethics – for themselves and the Council as a whole

These roles are common to all Councillors. Many undertake additional roles within the local and wider community, and some have additional responsibilities within the Council, for example as Chairmen of Committees or Cabinet members. For these they receive Special Responsibility Allowances. Details of these are set out in Appendix 4

All Councillors receive a basic allowance – which for 2003/2004 is £8,500, to increase in line with the Local Government pay settlement for 2004/2005. When reviewing the members allowance scheme for the Independent Panel for the Remuneration of Councillors in London (2003 report) identified that the basic allowances recognises the time commitment of Councillors including meetings with Council managers and constituents and attendance at political group meetings. It is also intended to cover incidental costs such as the use of Councillors' homes.

Innovative Community Roles for Councillors Considered

Reviewed the Local Strategic Partnerships Work

The Committee received a presentation about development of the Community Plan as part of the Local Strategic Partnership work. Community planning was described as having two central aspects – a top down aspect to better integrate policy planning and service delivery and a bottom up process of engaging communities to ensure local people influence policy and decision making. Officers recognised that more needed to be done to systematically engage local communities to inform the community plan. A key issue raised was :

'might the role of community Councillor provide a common thread that brings together the Council's approach to the new constitutional arrangements, the community plan and the security role?'

This was discussed and endorsed, and a number of practical ways of supporting community Councillors were proposed, which are reflected in the recommendations of this report. It was also agreed that the community planning process would be enhanced by drawing upon the local knowledge of members. Therefore a proposal that each Councillor be approached and asked about groups they are in contact with was endorsed. This would hopefully generate additional knowledge about local groups, including a number of 'hard to reach' groups that the Local Strategic Partnership was not aware of. It would also provide an indication of the activity and geographic reach of local groups. At the time of publication of this report results of this exercise were being evaluated, and would feed into the LSP process.

The Committee also received details of the Policy Committee decisions made in December 2000 and July 2001 about development of the Council's Community Plan. This included dividing the Borough into 'clusters' based on the Parliamentary constituency areas, each headed up by a Chief Officer. They were asked to produce (along with local Councillors) audits for the cluster areas covering such things as services provided / service gaps and area priorities.

Neighbourhood policing initiative – in December 2003 the Committee considered details of an initiative to be launched by the Metropolitan Police from April 2004, which would put additional police officers into South Ruislip, Townsfield and the West Drayton wards – part of the Step Change Programme. Following evaluation of this trial (and dependant upon funds being available) it was intended to roll this out across the Borough. The aim of the initiative is to 'deliver a new level of local policing in London that will make a tangible difference to people's lives; an accessible local policing presence based on visibility, familiarity and accessibility'.

Innovative elements of the scheme that the Committee welcomed were proposals that :

- The use of volunteers be encourage in dealing with environmental and behavioural factors impacting on the local community
- Selected wards must have their own 'People's Panel' or 'Citizen's Focus Group' involving people from the local community who will receive presentations on the issues identified and make decisions on priorities
- Police and partners would have a duty to report back on a regular basis to these bodies to review progress and priorities.

This was seen to be a valuable additional community resource, and one that local Councillors could bring a special level of knowledge and commitment to. It was envisaged that ward Councillors would serve on the proposed People's Panel / Citizen's Focus Group and there was discussion on a proposal that ward Councillors should be asked to chair such Groups. While recognising the contribution that Councillors could bring to this process on balance the Committee felt that the political neutrality of such bodies needed to be preserved. There could be a feeling from some individuals that this would be compromised if a Councillor was in the Chair. The Committee therefore recommended that the Chairmanship of these groups should come from

alternative groups – possibly one from the Council, one from the Police and one from a Residents Association.

Appendicies

Appendix 1 - Modernisation of Council WP – decisions re community Councillor

Appendix 2 - Best Value Review of Democratic Services – Outcome Related to Role of Community Councillor – Decision of Cabinet 27th November 2004

Appendix 3 - Member training programme 2002 / 2003

Appendix 4 - Members Allowance Scheme

Decision of Modernisation of Council Working Party	Action taken
<p>thereby contribute to local community life.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member briefings for all members 	-
<p>(b) Being Known in the Community –</p> <p>(i) Receiving invitations from Council organised events within wards – eg Social Service establishment open days, school events</p> <p>(ii) Posters / leaflets identifying ward Councillors and giving contact details, that Councillors could circulate through their wards</p> <p>(iii) Surgeries in a range of venues – this would involve the Council increasing the scope of its current policy of making Council venues available for surgeries and only paying for other venues when there was no Council venue available. The idea would be for surgeries to be held in a variety of different places reflecting the variety of different communities within wards, for example community centres, places of worship.</p> <p>(iv) Member business cards</p>	<p>Not always for all local ward Councillors Being developed</p> <p>-</p> <p>Provided</p>
<p>(c) Knowing How to Resolve Problems –</p> <p>Induction training is already proposed for 2002/2003 on this, which could be supported by documents produced in-house giving details of :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • local organisations that could help constituents, eg CAB, Relate • decision making powers within the Council (a condensed version of member and officer delegations) • the Councillor Casework system • Access to internet information resources, for example ukonline.gov.uk 	<p>Induction training covered this within the Community Councillor modules</p>

Best Value Review of Democratic Services – Outcome Related to Role of Community Councillor – Decision of Cabinet 27th November 2004

Best Value Review of Democratic Services

DECISION

1. That members note:

- (i) the Best Value Review of Democratic Services (DS) and particularly the outcome of the consultation and comparison exercises, assessment of competitiveness and the fundamental challenge of options; and
- (ii) that the review had shown very low staffing levels in DS, comparatively low costs, good satisfaction levels with the service provided but also the need for a more pro-active development of the service in the future, which is now moving forward through the recent reorganisation of the service.

2. That members note a) the following recommendations based on the five themes set out in the review and b) the action plan to achieve them:

THEME A -Improving the effectiveness of the member level processes

- (i) review, consolidate and improve the member decision making environment by a range of measures including the following:
 - (a) develop ways to revitalise Full Council meetings and make them more accessible to the community and user-friendly.
 - (b) review the respective roles, relationships and powers of the cabinet, individual cabinet members, directors and decision-making processes, including the Whips Committee, to ensure efficient, effective and open decision making and include this task in the Hillingdon Improvement Programme (HIP).
 - (c) prepare a clear manual incorporating all relevant procedure and guidance on governance and ensure widespread availability to both members and officers through electronic means;
 - (d) To building in procedures to enable Cabinet Members to better monitor and participate in the corporate 'health' of the authority;
 - (e) approve the drawing up of job descriptions for members of the cabinet and overview, scrutiny and planning committees inline with the Council's Constitution;
- (ii) endorse the need to strengthen the Council's scrutiny function as already identified in the Council's own annual review and highlighted by the local review by the Audit Commission and ask the Head of Democratic Services to submit a further report including resource implications and ways to ensure more community participation;

THEME B -Improving support services to Members

(iii) endorse the need to further develop support services to the Council's Cabinet, via the new Cabinet Office, to improve the Cabinet's internal and external communications, briefings, use of ICT and to enable greater public participation in the decision-making process.

(iv) examine the most cost effective option for supplying mayoral catering and review the adequacy of catering for members attending evening meetings;

(v) recognise that many members who are not in the cabinet need to develop new skills such as "influencing" to contribute effectively to the new decision-making system and initiate a range of measures to address the issue including the following:

(a) improve the supply of information to members, especially on matters affecting their Wards and consider the benefits and resource implications of a council-wide bulletin for members;

(b) review what action is needed to strengthen and develop the role of ward councillors and the specialist support provided to them in line with the selection of this as a scrutiny topic by the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

THEME C -Developing Member and staff capacity within the modernised political management arrangements

(vi) Endorse the urgent need for a comprehensive member development programme and instruct the Head of Democratic Services to bring forward costed proposals for this purpose;

(vii) develop the role of Democratic Services staff and consider new working arrangements under the new decision-making and scrutiny system;

(viii) examine the cost-effectiveness of creating a pool of casual, home -based clerks able to take on agenda production, minuting and other functions for a range of meetings so that Cabinet Office and Scrutiny Team members can devote a higher proportion of their time to their core duties.

THEME D -Enhancing the openness, accessibility and accountability of the democratic process

(ix) explore what further steps can be taken to create a more welcoming environment and improve practical access for members of the public to the Civic Centre and decision-making process.

(x) confirm the need for the further development and use of ICT and web based medium by DS staff and members to improve efficiency, public accountability and contribute effectively to the e-democracy agenda and draw up a specific action plan for this purpose;

THEME E - Improving the internal efficiency of democratic services

(xi) endorse the view that the vast majority of the work of Democratic Services is central to the work of the Council and not suitable for market testing except in a limited range of activities such as printing and the contract for mayoral chauffeur services;

(xii) establish a performance management culture in Democratic Services, based on the Performance Indicators (PIs) in appendix 4, linked to the Hillingdon Improvement framework and consider the extent to which a similar approach can be developed for members.

Member training programme 2002 / 2003

Appendix 3

Training Course	Target Audience	Date(s)	Venue	Training Provider
Planning for Councillors	Members of Planning Committees	Tue 14 th May	CR 6	Jean Palmer
Decision Making in Hillingdon	All Councillors	Tue 14 th May Wed 15 th May	CR 5 CI Chamber	David Brough
Away Day for Cabinet Members / Corporate Directors	Cabinet Members	20 th May – 10 – 4	Queens walk	ALG
Executive Decision Making	Cabinet Members	21 st May	CR 5	ALG
Planning – Principles for Decision Making	Members of Planning and Appeals Committees	Wed 22 nd May	CR 5	ALG
Overview and Scrutiny – Principles	Overview and Scrutiny members	Thur 23 rd May	CR 5	ALG
How to Chair a Meeting	All Chairmen	Wed 29 th May	CR 5	David Brough
Key Issues in Housing	All Councillors	Wed 5 th June	CR 5	Pam Lockley
Key Issues in Social Services	All Councillors	Thur 6 th June	CR 5	Jayne Martin
Key Issues in Environmental Services	All Councillors	Mon 10 th June	CR 5	Ruth Willis
Standards Committee – Principles	Members of Standards Committee	Tue 11 th June	CI Ch	ALG
Key Corporate Issues	All Councillors	Tue 12 th June	CI Ch	Dorian Leatham
Understanding Budgets	All Councillors	Mon 17 th June	CR 6	Janice Maule
Rights and Responsibilities of Councillors	All Councillors	Wed 19 th June	CR 5	David Brough / Raj Alagh
Equality Issues – Implications for Members	All Councillors	Mon 24 th June	CR 5	Arun Batra
Key Issues in Education, Youth and Leisure	All Councillors	Wed 26 th June	CR 5	Philip O’Hear

Training Course	Target Audience	Date(s)	Venue	Training Provider
Licensing Appeals	Members of Appeal Committee	Mon 1 st July	CR 5	Eric Xuereb
Partnership Working	All Councillors	Wed 3 rd July	CR 5	ALG
All Councillor Seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Mon 8 th July	CI Chamber	tbc
Councillors as Employers	All Councillors	Wed 10 th July	CR5	Roger Hackett
Health Service Issues in Hillingdon	All Councillors	Wed 17 th July	CR 3	Jayne Martin / Graeme Betts
All Councillor Seminar - topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Mon 9 th Sept	CI Chamber	tbc
Community Councillors – Topic 1	All Councillors	Tue 3 rd Sept; Thur 26 th Sept; Thur 7 th Nov; Thur 16 th Jan	CR 5 CR 5 CR 5 Tbc	ALG
Community Councillors – Topic 2	All Councillors	Tue 15 th Oct; Tue 5 th Nov; Tue 12 th Nov; and Thur 5 th Dec	CR 5 CR 5 CR 5 CR 5	ALG
Community Councillors – Topic 3	All Councillors	Wed 11 th Sept; Mon 4 th Nov; Tue 3 rd Dec and Mon 27 th Jan	CR 6 CR 5 CR 6 tbc	ALG
Community Councillor – Topic 4	All Councillors	Thur 5 th Sept; Thur 9 th Jan; Thur 6 th Feb and	CR 5 tbc tbc	ALG

Training Course	Target Audience	Date(s)	Venue	Training Provider
		Tue 11 th March	tbc	
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Mon 14 th Oct	Cl Chamber	tbc
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Tue 19 th Nov	CR 6	tbc
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Mon 9 th Dec	CR 5	tbc
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Mon 20 th Jan	tbc	tbc
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Tue 11 th Feb	tbc	tbc
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Thur 27 th March	tbc	tbc
All Councillor seminar – topic to be confirmed	All Councillors	Tue 6 th May	tbc	tbc

**Members Allowance Scheme
(considered by Cabinet on 25th March 2004)**

For 2004/05 an allowance of £**** will be payable to all Councillors (figure still yet to be determined, depends on Local Government Pay Settlement) and will be increased in line with the annual Local Government Pay Settlement each year and paid in equal monthly instalments. The basic allowance includes intra borough travel and subsistence costs. The current basic allowance for 2003/04 is £8755.

3. Special Responsibility Allowances

Special responsibility allowances of the following amounts shall be paid in equal monthly instalments to Councillors holding the following responsibilities:

	(£)
Mayor	15,000
Deputy Mayor	7,500
Leader of the Council	32,500
Deputy Leader of the Council	25,000
Chief Whip of Largest Party	12,300
Leader of 2 nd Party	12,300
Deputy Leader of 2 nd Party	4,500
Chief Whip of 2 nd Party	4,500
Leader of 3 rd Party	6,000
Chief Whip of 3 rd Party	3,000
Cabinet Member (x 7)	20,000
Chairman of Scrutiny Committees	12,500
Chairman of Co-ordinating Committee*	12,500
2 nd Party Lead on Scrutiny Committees	4,500
3 rd Party Lead on Scrutiny Committees	2,500
Chairman of Planning Committees	12,500
Party Lead on Planning Committees	4,500
Chairman of Standards Committee	2,500