

All Members Matter Programme for Breckland District Council

Action Plan – Update 21 January 2008

Aim	Proposed Action	Lead Officer	Timescale	Resource Implications	Action to Date
Introduce automatic 'triggers' to ensure that Ward Councillors are given advance notice and are consulted on issues that affect their wards.	The possibility of using Modern.Gov to provide the software for this to be done electronically is being investigated. If this is successful Service Managers will still need to enter the information.	Annalisa Graziano	March 2008	Officer Time	Following consultation. An I.T. solution will be recommended to Members via a report going to the Member Training Panel on Monday, 18 February 2008.
Develop more regular communication between Non-Executive Councillors and Officers.	Contact councils highlighted in report to see if the areas of best practice in those authorities can be implemented at Breckland Council.	Sian Harland	May 2008	Officer Time	Action to be taken March 2008 with report in May 2008.
Improving support for Members in their external representative role.	Provide Members with information about the Outside Bodies they serve on and also ask them to report back on key issues arising through Modern.Gov.	Sian Harland	In place and ongoing	Officer Time	E-Library on Mod.gov containing Outside Body Info and Minutes. Members Web Pages. Letters sent to Members requesting they send all outside body minutes to Committee Services for inclusion in the e- Library.
Developing a 'level playing field' for Members representing rural and urban wards by reviewing member allowances.	Members Allowance Panel to review allowances for Members in rural areas.	Ian Vargeson	Autumn 2008	Unknown	New scheme Autumn 2008

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Training and development programmes for officers.	These should incorporate training for officers on the roles of Councillors, possibly through the Corporate Induction Programme.	Natalie King	April 2008	Officer Time	A new Corporate Induction Pack is being worked on for completion by April 2008. Please see below *1
Training and development programmes should be designed around Personal Development Plans for councillors.	Future development and training needs for Members will be agreed with them on an individual basis as part of their Personal Development Plans.	Stephen McGrath	March/April 2008	Member and Officer Time	The interviews will commence in the next few months
Reviewing political group arrangements to support the role of the Non-Executive Councillor.	Review political group arrangements.	Leader of each group/Trevor Holden	2007/08	Member and Officer Time	On-going
Making Members and Employers aware of the rights for time off for Public Duties.	Write to Members and their Employers to point out these rights.	Ian Vargeson	Autumn 2007	Officer Time	Task completed on target Oct/Nov 2007.
Provide induction training that describes the new democratic landscape in which members will have to work.	This training will be provided throughout the four year term of office for the Elected Members.	Stephen McGrath	2007/10	Officer Time and Financial Costs will be met from within the existing Member Training budgets	The initial Member Induction Training was undertaken between May and October 2007. Members will be provided with further training in accordance with their Personal Development Plans.
Planning Applications to be posted within 24 hours of being determined and planning drawings to be put on-line.	Matter to be referred to Development Services Manager for consideration.	Phil Daines	May 2008 (subject to the installation of 1App) Please see below *2	Officer Time and Financial Costs will be met within existing resources.	All textual information about planning applications already goes on line when it is received. A new DMS (Document Management System) is in the process of being installed which will enable all planning drawings to be posted on line.

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More discussion on budget – possibly through an extra General Purposes Committee meeting – and also more cross party working and regular officer briefings with Non-Executive Members.	Matter to be referred to Chief Accountant for consideration.	Mark Finch	Unknown	Officer Time	Awaiting steer from the Executive to give direction on what level Members would like to receive information on the budget. Suggested the Audit Committee could be a great forum for Members to receive this information.
Ward Surgeries	Some Members require help on setting up and holding Ward Surgeries.	Stephen McGrath	May 2008	Officer Time	This will be progressed through the EERA Charter and the Member Training Panel later this year.
Provide Ward Pages in Breckland Voice.	Matter to be referred to Mary Palmer for consideration.	Mary Palmer	To write a letter to Members Feb 2008.	Within existing budget.	No action to date. However, letter will be sent to all Members giving the Voice Deadlines and asking for articles/info for a Ward Page in Voice.
Improve information flows through three tiers of Government.	Look at possible ways to do this.	Sian Harland	May 2008	Officer Time	Various initiatives are being explored, with the following being implemented:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Parish Council Forum • Open Days
More Updates on Legal and Planning Issues for all Members.	Matter to be referred to Head of Legal Services, Environmental Planning Manager and Development Services Manager for consideration.	Mike Horn/Phil Daines/Andrea Long	Unknown	Unknown	Please see below *3
Consider employing Political Assistants	Look at feasibility of doing this.	Ian Vargeson	May 2008	Officer Time	Reports have been taken to Members with recommendations for employing a political

					assistant however; Members do not want a political assistant. It is being considered under the Cabinet re-organisation that the council have a research budget to utilise UEA Masters students' expertise e.g. assisting with research for the Scrutiny function.
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- *1 - The pack mentions Councillors and prompts its' reader to Member Profile pages on the website. In addition, it is planned through the Cabinet re-organisation a post will be created for a designated Training and Development Officer to sit within the HR Team and focus solely on the training and development of all Breckland Officers.
- *2 – **1App** – Is an application with a government requirement to be on-line by April 2008. The application supplies electronic forms for individuals to complete when submitting a planning application. The DMS installed on target is subject to the installation 1App as the same officers are required to install 1App, as a priority, followed by the new DMS.
- *3 - **Update on decisions made regarding planning:**
 - All non-delegated decisions go before the Planning Committee.
 - Members receive a list of all decisions made by NCC.
 - Members receive a regular enforcement update.
 - Members receive a list of all Hearings and Appeals results.

Updates on Law:

- When there are changes to planning guidance regarding the law, these are taken and examined as agenda items.
- Each agenda item has in depth analysis – with guidance from the law.
- Planning has a procedure to inform Members of all pending Planning Applications that may or may not be called into committee.