

Responses collected from Braintree, Swindon and Norwich – How they consult with their councillors

Braintree

“We have a Member’s Lounge and in it we place consultation and information documents. We also place such documents on our website and we also send out as Members’ Focus which comprises short concise reports on matters of interest and importance.

At the induction day, we asked our councillors of the type of information they would like to receive. All our Councillors have a public e-mail address which actually directs the e-mails to Democratic Services where they are then forwarded on to the Councillors’ private addresses. This prevents them from receiving too much spam as we act as the ‘filter’. This also enables us to direct the mail to the most appropriate councillor.

We only send out to our councillors once a week as we encourage electronic communication. We therefore place a great deal of emphasis on our website and we have created a page for each of our 60 councillors and we ask them to let us know what they want added to their individual page. Resources are limited however, so the management of e-government will be an ever increasing burden until we can wipe out paper copies all together.”

Swindon

“At Swindon we produce a Members Bulletin which is also accessible on the Council’s website under Committee and Member information/Library. We use these documents to consult, inform etc.”

Norwich

“Councillors have access to what we call “e-councillor” that is a web-based information using a package call “sharepoint” – This allows all councillors to access information posted on it and gives dedicated space for each Group (managed by political assistants) i.e. if you log on as a Labour Cllr you only get toolbar link to the Labour pages etc.

We also sent out a weekly member’s bulletin electronically with deadline info linking, where necessary, to more detailed documents (that are stored on e-councillor).”