

BRECKLAND COUNCIL

MEMBER TRAINING PANEL – 18 FEBRUARY 2008

POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW PANEL 2 – 28 FEBRUARY 2008

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE MEMBER (CABINET)

(Author: Annalisa Graziano, Committee Officer)

ACTION PLAN UPDATE - ALL MEMBERS MATTER PROGRAMME FOR BRECKLAND DISTRICT COUNCIL

Summary: The Local Government Information Unit has undertaken a review of Member Support and produced a report identifying possible areas for improvement. In July 2007, Officers analysed the report and produced an action plan to deliver the improvements. The action plan was revisited during January 2008 and an update of the action plan is attached for Members' information.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 In March 2004, the Comprehensive Performance Assessment report found that:

“Councillor training and support is inadequate. Some Councillors feel excluded from the Council's activities and as a result do not represent the Council positively.”

1.2 During the autumn of 2005, Breckland Council agreed to commission an independent review of the Council's support for ward councillors. The review was based on the Local Government Information Unit's "All Members Matter" programme. The package aimed to assist Members in their role as a ward representative and community champion by focusing on their representative role, clarifying and then meeting the support those councillors need to perform effectively.

1.3 During 2006/07, various focus groups were held with Members and Officers to discuss ways in which Member Support could be improved. In addition, a comprehensive survey of Member Support was undertaken. This information was used by the Local Government Information Unit to highlight areas for improvement. These were incorporated into the report produced in July 2007.

2. KEY DECISION

2.1 This is not a key decision.

3. COUNCIL PRIORITIES

3.1 The matters raised in this report fall within the following Council priorities:-

- A well planned place to live which encourages vibrant communities
- A safe and healthy environment
- A prosperous place to live and work

3.2 By improving the support to Elected Members, this will enable them to fulfil their Ward Councillor role better.

4. ACTION PLAN UPDATE

- 4.1 The action plan has now been updated and is attached as Appendix 1 to the report.
- 4.2 Whilst only a couple of the action points have been completed to date, considerable progress has been made in addressing the remaining issues, as indicated. Some of these issues are on-going matters and the others are on target to meet the agreed deadline.

5. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 5.1 To provide Members with an update of the progress made in implementing the Action Plan for the All Members Matter Programme for Breckland Council.

6. RISK

I have completed the Risk Management questionnaire and this report does not require a risk assessment because the issues covered by the recommendation is not significant in terms of risk.

6. RECOMMENDATION

- 6.1 That Members note the progress made to date.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – All Members Matter Programme for Breckland District Council – Action Plan Update 21 January 2008.

This report has taken account of the need for compliance with the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy and the requirements of Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the Human Rights Act 1998. This report raises no matters to which attention specifically needs to be drawn under the legislation.