

ETHICS AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 1 October 2013

6.00 pm

Committee Room 1, City Hall

Membership:	Councillors Geoff Ellis (Chair), David Jackson (Vice-Chair), Chris Burke, Ronald Hills, Ric Metcalfe, Hilton Spratt, Ralph Toofany and Loraine Woolley
Substitute member(s):	Councillors Brent Charlesworth, David Grattrick, Gary Hewson and Geoff Kirby
Independent Person(s):	Chris Elkington and Roger Vine
Officers attending:	Democratic Services and Carolyn Wheeler

A G E N D A

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Please note that, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, when declaring interests members must disclose the existence and nature of the interest, and whether it is a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI) or personal and/or pecuniary.	
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- Present:** Councillor Geoff Ellis (*in the Chair*)
- Councillors:** Chris Burke, Ronald Hills, David Jackson, Ric Metcalfe, Hilton Spratt, Ralph Toofany and Loraine Woolley
- Independent Person(s):** Chris Elkington and Roger Vine
- Apologies for Absence:** None.

9. Confirmation of Minutes - 29 May 2013

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 29 May 2013 be confirmed.

10. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

11. Code of Conduct: Cases Review

The Assistant Director of Legal and Corporate Support Services:

- a) presented a report containing information on recent cases relating to other local authorities' codes of conduct.
- b) noted broad similarities between the case highlighted for the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council and the Western Growth Corridor's position for the City of Lincoln Council. Officers were giving careful consideration to the committee process and would circulate relevant guidance to members.
- c) highlighted that members should identify any issues raised within the report as being relevant for further consideration with regard to their impact upon members.
- d) invited members' questions and comments.

Members:

- welcomed the production of guidance regarding the Council's position with the Western Growth Corridor.
- discussed the limited nature of the powers available to councils seeking to sanction councillors in breach of a code of conduct, noting the role of political parties in sanctioning their members.

The Assistant Director of Legal and Corporate Support Services responded to confirm the sanctions still available to the Council in cases regarding a breach of the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

12. European Citizens' Electoral Turnouts

The Assistant Director of Legal and Corporate Support Services:

- e) presented a report in response to the Committee's previous consideration of electoral turnout, focusing upon turnout among European Union citizens.
- f) highlighted that while turnout in the sampled areas did appear to be significantly lower among European Union citizens than for other groups, it was not possible to conclude the reason for this from the available data.
- g) drew members' attention to the opportunities available to bid for funding from the Cabinet Office to introduce schemes intended to improve electoral registration among difficult-to-reach groups.
- h) advised members of planned work with the National Union of Students to pilot new ways to encourage student registration.
- i) invited members' questions and comments.

Members:

- noted the low overall turnout and discussed the extent to which it would be appropriate to focus resources on encouraging European Union citizens to vote given low turnout rates among other larger sections of Lincoln's population.
- considered the arrangements in place to assist students in registering to vote.
- discussed the possible reasons behind European Union citizens' lack of engagement with the electoral process, particularly noting the need to ensure citizens were properly integrated within local communities, and the possibility that voters were not fully aware of the differences between political parties.
- agreed that it would be appropriate to take advantage of any opportunities to gain additional funding to improve local voter registration, while also seeking to maximise electoral turnout.
- discussed the role of politicians and central government in affecting people's likelihood to vote.
- suggested seeking to raise funds to provide information on voting in languages other than English.

The Independent Person welcomed any attempts to improve electoral turnout, noting the importance of democratic legitimacy for those who were elected.

RESOLVED that officers be requested to bid for the available funding to increase electoral registration rates.

13. Increasing Democratic Engagement with Young People

The Assistant Director of Legal and Corporate Support Services:

- j) presented a report regarding the development of a format for member-student panels between councillors and local schools.
- k) summarised proposals for the content and membership of a panel provisionally scheduled for September 2013.
- l) explained that, if successful, the format would be used as a basis for further events with other local school.
- m) noted that the timing of the event had been arranged to fit with the timetable for the school and pupils.

n) invited members' questions and comments.

Members:

- discussed the visit by pupils to a previous meeting, and the need to ensure the Committee was flexible about visiting pupils in schools or being visited by them.
- emphasised the benefits of using a format which encouraged a dialogue between councillors and students.
- noted the value in ensuring the representative councillors were selected in accordance with political proportionality, and, if possible, included a suitable councillor from Lincolnshire County Council.

RESOLVED that:

1. the proposed format of the proposed member-student panels be approved.
2. officers be requested to arrange for suitable councillors to take part in the member-student panel.

14. Local Democracy Week

The Democratic Services Officer:

- o) presented a report regarding the Council's participation in Local Democracy Week.
- p) emphasised the limited staff and financial resources available to support additional activities, which had led to the development of broadly-based proposals for democratic engagement.
- q) noted that members' input on the proposals would be valuable in developing activities which, given the short timescales in advance of the 2013 event, would be suitable for development with a view to participation in future years.
- r) invited members' questions and comments.

Members:

- discussed the provision of citizenship lessons within schools and the benefits of local elected representatives attending events with pupils.
- noted that lesson plans were often subsumed into normal school work and so could miss the original focus of the plans.
- suggested that greater use of social media and the website should be made in order to reach young people.
- considered the short time span available in advance of Local Democracy Week 2013 and the likely impact of this upon the possible activities
- suggested that a format be developed to allow young people to present solutions to local problems to a panel of councillors with a prize awarded for the best solutions.
- discussed the most effective ways to engage young people, including debates involving role play.

The Reserve Independent Person noted the proximity of the event to the member-student panel and suggested that the events could be linked.

RESOLVED that:

1. officers be requested to coordinate with the Chair suitable activities for the Council's participation in Local Democracy Week.
2. regular updates be scheduled to update the Committee on progress with arrangements for Local Democracy Week.

15. Webcasting Cost-Benefit Analysis

The Democratic Services Officer:

- s) presented a report regarding the potential adoption of technology to allow the webcasting of committee meetings.
- t) outlined the potential costs and benefits associated with different webcasting systems.
- u) noted that officers and the Chair had viewed the operation of an existing webcasting system at a neighbouring council.
- v) highlighted a related proposal to allow members of the public greater freedom to record Council meetings.
- w) invited members' questions and comments.

Members:

- noted that while the principle of webcasting was to be supported, the cost could not be justified given the cutbacks made to the Council's budget.
- considered the operation of the webcasting system at Lincolnshire County Council, noting that it was not obtrusive and that the expense was more easily justified in a local authority covering a large geographical area.
- discussed the openness of Council meetings and the opportunities for members of the public to record meetings.

The Reserve Independent Person noted his concerns regarding the possibility of members of the public recording meetings without notifying the Chair of their intention to do so.

RESOLVED that:

1. no further action be taken with regard to webcasting meetings.
2. Council be recommended to amend article 27 of the Council Procedure Rules as follows:

The recording, broadcasting, or photographing of the proceedings of any Council or committee meetings shall be permitted. In the event that this causes significant disruption to the proceedings of a meeting, the Mayor (in the case of a Council meeting) or the Chair (in the case of a committee meeting) shall be entitled to prevent any further recording, broadcasting, or photographing of the relevant meeting.

16. Work Programme Update

The Democratic Services Officer:

- a. presented the current Ethics and Engagement Committee work programme for consideration by members.
- b. noted that updates on Local Democracy Week had been scheduled for the two following meetings.
- c. invited members' questions and comments.

RESOLVED that the work programme be approved.

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SUBJECT: CODE OF CONDUCT: CASES REVIEW

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To provide information on recent cases relating to other local authorities' codes of conduct and consider their potential relevance to the Council.

2. National Cases Relating to Councillor Conduct

- 2.1 Since the removal of the Standards for England Board as part of the changes brought through the Localism Act 2011, the Council no longer receives a summary of cases reported from across the country. As a result, the cases chosen for consideration are drawn primarily from local government networks and media reports, and are summarised below.

- 2.2 The reports highlighted are gathered solely from information made available by the relevant local authorities. As cases are often considered to contain exempt information, there are potentially elements of the case which may not be publicly available. As such, members should be aware that the cases below are provided for the purpose of discussion and may not give the full picture in every regard.

2.3 East Devon District Council

The proposed sale of an asset drew specific public criticism which the assistant chief executive regarded as being 'unworthy of even vaguely intelligent debate'. A dual-hatted member wrote to a local newspaper criticising this comment and questioning the officer's competence. While the letter had been signed in the member's role as a county councillor, it was investigated by the district council. The district council's standards committee found that the criticism of the officer's comment had not breached the member code of conduct but that the suggestion of incompetency had. The councillor was censured, and all members were requested to undergo training regarding the member-officer protocol. Officers were further requested to review procedures regarding their contributions to the local press.

2.4 Kirklees Council

A councillor using a tablet computer during a committee meeting was allegedly criticised by the chair of the committee in such a manner that caused 'unnecessary distress and embarrassment' to the councillor who had been using the computer. The councillor confirmed that the tablet computer had been used to view information relevant to the matter under consideration. The chair had been responding to a concern raised by a member of the public. The councillor who had been using the tablet computer complained to the monitoring officer regarding the

chair's conduct, who determined that no further action was required.

3. Potential Learning Points

- 3.1 Having regard to these complaints which have been investigated by other local authorities, members should consider whether any appropriate actions can be identified to ensure that the likelihood of any future breaches of the Member Code of Conduct by members representing the City of Lincoln Council is limited.
- 3.2 The Ethics and Engagement Committee may wish to consider the following actions if any learning points are identified:
 - Issuing guidance to members and any other relevant parties on a general topic which presents a cause for concern with a view to potential future breaches of the Member Code of Conduct.
 - Requesting specific training for all members or members whose individual status would be relevant to the particular training.
 - Proposing amendments to the Member Code of Conduct and the procedure for considering complaints, if improvements can be identified.
 - Any other actions falling within the remit of the Committee which might aid the improvement of councillors' conduct.
- 3.3 If members are aware of further cases of broad interest from other local authorities in relation to ethical behaviour by councillors, details can be submitted via Democratic Services or raised at the meeting of the Committee for potential inclusion in a future report.

4. Strategic Priorities

- 4.1 The development of a fit-for-purpose council relies upon the proper conduct of officers and members. By considering the lessons learned from other local authorities the Council is better positioned to take preventative action to resolve any potential issues before they arise.

5. Organisational Impacts

5.1 Finance

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5.2 Legal Implications

The Ethics and Engagement Committee's role includes the promotion and maintenance of high standards of conduct by councillors and co-opted members; this report forms a part of the work of the Committee in proactively addressing any matter that could detract from the reputation and behaviour of the Council or its councillors.

6. Recommendation

- 6.1 That the Ethics and Engagement Committee note the contents of the report and recommend any suitable action arising from it.

SUBJECT: THE PROMOTION OF CITIZENSHIP WITHIN SCHOOLS

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of the member-student panel trial at Lincoln Christ's Hospital on 27 September 2013.

2. Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 11 March 2013, the Committee heard representations from a delegation of the Lincoln Christ's Hospital School regarding young people's engagement with democracy. As an outcome of the meeting, members resolved that officers should seek to work with the school to establish a trial format aimed at aiding young people's engagement with local democracy.
- 2.2 The overall intention for the trial is two-fold: to increase students' knowledge of and engagement with the democratic process, while also helping the Council and councillors to understand the aspirations and views of Lincoln's young people. If successful, it is likely that the format could be extended and replicated both in future years and in different schools across Lincoln.
- 2.3 The Committee supported proposals at its meeting on 30 July 2013 for a member-student panel format, the initial membership of which comprised:
- Councillor C. Burke
 - Councillor G. Ellis
 - Councillor Hills
 - Councillor Metcalfe
 - Councillor Oxby, Lincolnshire County Council

3. Matters for Members' Consideration

- 3.1 At the time of publishing this report, the member-student panel has yet to take place. Once completed participating members will be requested to feedback to the Committee on:
- the suitability of the format used for the panel.
 - the composition of the panel, i.e. whether any future panels should have a different mix of councillors including Lincolnshire County Council, portfolio holders, and local ward members.
 - any comments received from school students or staff regarding the event.

- any general observations which could form the basis of further action with regard to the Committee's aim of increasing democratic engagement with young people.

3.2 Having considered this feedback, members should be able to consider the most suitable next steps for this programme, including the format, timing, and hosts for any future activity.

4. Organisational Impacts

4.1 Finance

There are no financial implications to this report.

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to this report.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That members consider whether the trial format for the member-student panel is suitable for future usage or requires further refinement.

5.2 That members recommend whether member-student panels should be pursued across the city on an ongoing basis.

SUBJECT: ENCOURAGING ELECTORAL ENGAGEMENT

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 In accordance with the Committee's responsibility to improve democratic engagement between the public and the Council, this report is provided to offer a starting point and summary for members' consideration.

2. Background

- 2.1 As part of the Council's Strategic Plan, the target to reduce poverty and disadvantage within Lincoln was agreed as being one of the Council's five strategic priorities. One strand of this priority was to increase levels of democratic engagement among Lincoln's citizens, thereby also contributing towards the broader priority of creating a fit-for-purpose Council. While the priorities have since been re-focused, the original priority remains in place as an aspiration for the Council.
- 2.2 Initial scoping work was undertaken with Lincoln University with a view to the Council adopting a two-pronged approach to improving electoral engagement; this was intended to see members feeding into the process via the Ethics and Engagement Committee, while an internal working group developed detailed proposals in combination with representatives from Lincoln University.
- 2.3 Following this initial scoping, the work outside the Ethics and Engagement Committee has been postponed as a result of conflicting priorities and the Council's re-focused strategic aims. However, the Committee retains its responsibility to seek to improve this area of Council business, while noting the continuing constraint upon resources.

3. Initial Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 Initial work provided to the Committee by officers and the Chair indicated that the following aims and methods would be appropriate in order to identify and tackle problems around electoral engagement.

Aims

- To assess turnout rates as a whole and for individual groups to establish any relevant disparities between them.
- To understand the reasons behind local people choosing not to register to vote.
- To understand the reasons behind local people choosing not to cast their

votes.

- To examine whether the Council can seek to undertake any cost-effective and resource-efficient actions to improve electoral turnout.
- To consider the potential impact of individual registration and any possible mitigation to drops in electoral registration rates.

Method

- Undertaking a comparison of electoral turnout in selected districts to establish whether other European Union voters are more or less likely to take part in local elections than British citizens.
- Seeking input from psephologists on broader national trends in voting patterns.
- Early forecasting of the effect of individual registration and a broad examination of the associated principles and practices.
- Carrying out an examination of best practice elsewhere and opportunities for joint working with other local authorities.
- Tackling electoral registration among homeless people.
- Examining the potential use of neighbourhood managers in improving electoral engagement.
- Bidding for new funding from the Cabinet Office for targeted canvassing and increasing electoral registration among key groups.

3.2 European Union Voters

Work has already been undertaken on some of the areas outlined above. At the previous meeting of the Committee, members considered the outcome of a small study into the electoral turnout rates of European Union citizens within Lincoln. This study suggested that turnout rates among European Union electors were approximately 3-4 times lower than among non-European Union electors in local government elections. Following consideration of the report, members resolved to support a bid for Cabinet Office funding to improve electoral registration rates among targeted groups; if possible, this work would encompass European Union voters. Feedback is currently awaited from other local authorities who put forward bids in the first round of funding, although initial indications suggest a relatively high failure rate among the bids placed by other councils.

3.3 Individual Registration

As members will be aware, recent legislation has changed the method by which the public will register to vote. In the past, one electoral registration form has been delivered to each house in the city, which is then filled in and returned to the Council. In 2014 the Council is scheduled to switch to individual registration, as part of which each individual elector must personally complete and return an electoral registration form. The switch will also see the electoral register being cross-referenced with information from the Department for Work and Pensions to automatically register as many voters as possible. While a number of aspects relating to this new way of working have yet to be confirmed by the Cabinet Office, officers are actively developing the Council's response to the likely changes. A briefing note will be circulated to all members by the Electoral Registration Officer shortly.

3.4 With regard to the Committee's remit to increase electoral engagement, there are undoubtedly a number of fundamental structural changes to the electoral system

would could help in improving turnout. However, the manner in which elections must be conducted is very closely regulated with little discretion for local innovation. As such, members are encouraged to consider more creative methods for encouraging electoral engagement; any other decisions remain solely within the power of central government.

3.5 Ward Twitter Accounts

The Council is currently reviewing its approach to the use of social media within the authority. As part of this review consideration has been given to how councillors can best use social media to engage with residents. The Committee will recall that it recently approved social media guidance which was issued to all councillors in order to offer members a framework for acceptable behaviour in using services such as Twitter and Facebook. However, while this guidance acknowledged the clear benefits of new social media, its focus was not upon changing the manner in which councillors engaged with the public.

3.6 With this in mind, officers have proposed that each ward of the city should have its own Twitter account which all ward councillors would be able to access and would be monitored by the Communications Team. A brief outline of some of the associated advantages and disadvantages of this approach are provided for members' consideration.

3.7 **Advantages**

- Non-individualised accounts would be transferrable in the event of electoral changes or the retirement of councillors
- Maintains a separation from councillors' individual political accounts
- Joint accounts remove sole responsibility for individual councillors to check their Twitter accounts
- May encourage councillors to make greater use of a new communication channel for contacting residents
- Ward accounts could become a form of community hub, not only opening channels of communication with members, but also promoting events and improving community cohesion within each ward.

Disadvantages

- Possible difficulty in establishing which councillor has responded to a concern, unless councillors use individual accounts for responses
- Risk of political material being published using a Council account (subject to removal by officers)
- Lack of individual responsibility for cases may see some ward councillors undertaking more ward work than others
- Preference among some councillors for individual face-to-face or telephone contact

3.8 As members will note, implementing ward Twitter accounts could be a useful tool in reaching different sections of Lincoln's population. Any implementation could be supported by training either from officers or external social media users, or carried out on a trial basis in a limited number of wards. Members are therefore requested to provide their views regarding this proposal.

3.9 Other Areas of Work

In addition to the areas summarised above, members are requested to provide input regarding the areas put forward within paragraph 3.1 which are of greatest interest to the Committee in progressing the electoral engagement theme. This will provide a focus for officers in providing information to future meetings and also help to ensure the best use of the available resources. Members are also invited to put forward any other areas which would benefit from development with regard to electoral engagement and can be progressed by the Committee.

4. **Organisational Impacts**

4.1 Finance

There are no direct financial implications to this report, although consideration should be given to the likely cost of any additional actions recommended by the Committee.

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to this report.

5. **Recommendation**

5.1 That members consider the report and highlight any areas within paragraph 3.1 of the report which the Committee would like to focus upon in future meetings.

5.2 That members provide particular feedback regarding the proposals for ward Twitter accounts outlined in paragraph 3.5.

SUBJECT: CIVIC PARTY GUIDANCE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To inform members of the safeguards and processes in place to ensure a high standard of behaviour by the Civic Party in dealing with the public and representing the Council.

2. Background

- 2.1 Members regularly receive updates regarding code of conduct cases which have emerged in other English local authorities. At its meeting on 29 May 2013, members considered a case relating to inappropriate behaviour by a ceremonial Mayor in another authority.
- 2.2 In response to this case, members considered the manner in which any similar case would either be averted or dealt with by the City of Lincoln Council. This report is intended to summarise the current processes for members' information and consideration.

3. Guidance Summary

- 3.1 Members will recall that their interest in this area was prompted by inappropriate remarks made by a Mayor to a schoolchild in his formal role at an official event. The Mayor subsequently voluntarily resigned his position.
- 3.2 With specific regard to the manner in which the Council ensures the behaviour of its Civic Party, the primary formal means is the Member Code of Conduct. The Code already applies to councillors taking a civic post, and is also signed by the Sheriff as part of the Declaration on Acceptance of Office. Among other things, the Code makes clear the responsibility of signatories to behave in a respectful and appropriate manner to the public. There is also a formal role description in place to offer guidance on the positions within the Civic Party.
- 3.3 In addition to this formal provision, the principal means by which the behaviour of the Civic Party is monitored and guided remains the continual training and feedback provided by the Civic Manager and other officers within the Civic Team. In advance of undertaking any role, detailed guidance is provided to all members of the Civic Party on the nature of their position and the importance of appropriate behaviour. Indeed, members are reminded that they should seek to attain the highest possible level of behaviour in their duties, to an even greater extent than in the role of a councillor. To this end, each member of the Civic Party is issued with

a copy of the Civic Handbook, which encompasses a large number of protocol guidance notes, in addition to reminders regarding equal opportunities and the officer code of practice.

- 3.4 Members will note that, given the inevitable annual turnover of individuals within the Civic Party, there is a constant need for training and refreshers to be provided. Equally, it is not possible to guarantee the behaviour of any individual at all times given the large number of engagements and the regularly changing postholders. As such, given the highly public and sensitive nature of the role, the Council retains measures by which any behaviour which threatens to tarnish the reputation of Lincoln, the Council, or the Civic Party can be actively managed.
- 3.5 In particular, the Civic Manager and the Chief Executive and Town Clerk remain in close contact with members of the Civic Party and would proactively engage with any members whose behaviour is alleged to have fallen below or is likely to fall below the high standards expected of Lincoln's civic ambassadors. If it proved necessary, members of the Civic Party who were unable to ensure suitably high standards of behaviour would be reminded of their duties by the Chief Executive and Town Clerk. In the event that this proved ineffective, there would be engagement with the Leader and a relevant political group leader. Ultimate sanctions range from non inclusion in events to removal from office. Proactive diary management would ensure that any further opportunities for inappropriate behaviour were expressly limited.
- 3.6 In addition to the guidance and other measures provided through officers of the Council, members will also be aware of other mechanisms by which appropriate behaviour can be ensured. In particular, the role of political leaders within the Council may be relevant to members of the Civic Party who are also members of the appropriate political parties, while the Monitoring Officer and the Ethics and Engagement Committee continue to hold their formal role in monitoring and sanctioning members' behaviour as required.

4. Organisational Impacts

- 4.1 Finance
There are no financial implications to this report.
- 4.2 Legal Implications
There are no legal implications to this report.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That members note the contents of the report and put forward any relevant comments for consideration in developing guidance to the Civic Party.

SUBJECT: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 The Council is committed to developing its councillors to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to carry out their roles in the most effective manner. The member development programme is a key part of this process, and this report provides a summary of the current position for members' consideration.

2. 2012/13 Summary

2.1 During 2012/13 the focus of member development was upon the new members elected to the Council following the elections on 3 May 2012. This training covered all member development areas previously described as being mandatory, as well as specific training organised to address individual member requests.

2.2 In addition to *ad hoc* workshops and seminars covering consultations with members and briefings on areas of Council business, training the following areas was delivered:

- Planning Committee
- Licensing Committee
- Council Procedures Rules (new members only)
- Equality & Diversity
- Scrutiny (evening internal training)
- Local Government Finance
- Standards/Member Interests
- Community Engagement
- New Councillor Development Day (new members only)
- Effective Partnership Working
- Scrutiny (all-day external training)
- Anti-Extremism (PREVENT)
- Licensing Sub-Committee

2.3 As discussed at a previous meeting, 2013/14 member development attendance statistics have now been made available on the Council's website to allow residents to understand the skills and knowledge acquired by individual councillors as part of their duties.

3. 2013/14 Plans

- 3.1 As the Council elects its members in thirds over the course of a four-year period, 2013/14 did not see a significant change to its membership, with only one by-election taking place on 22 August 2013. As such, the usual events and training provided for new members have not been provided this year. As part of the previous report to the Committee regarding member development, members did not propose any areas of training for inclusion in the 2013/14 training programme.
- 3.2 Following a recent request from a councillor and subsequent consultation with members, training in speed reading will be arranged in the near future for members. This training is specifically aimed at councillors seeking to improve their ability to consume and comprehend the large volumes of paperwork sent out for committee meetings and other areas of business.
- 3.3 Members are also invited to put forward any further training suggestions for consideration during 2013/14 which is likely to benefit a group of councillors or members as a whole. Officers remain keen, as reported previously to the Committee, for members to take a lead in contributing towards the member development programme. It is hoped that this will ensure that the programme will be relevant to members and that any training will be useful and well-attended.
- 3.4 Officers have continued to take part in the Lincolnshire Member Development Group, although opportunities for effective joint working remain limited primarily by different working and geographical arrangements. In particular, the size of Lincolnshire makes travel between the districts difficult, while Lincolnshire County Council's differing responsibilities and meeting timings present a different set of challenges. However, the opportunity to compare good practice and share training opportunities will continue to be worked upon.
- 3.5 Development has also now begun on the 2014/15 member development programme. As 2014/15 falls in an election year, training at the beginning of the year will be focussed upon the 'mandatory' elements previously prescribed within the Constitution. In addition, consideration will again be given to providing a dedicated all-day training session for new councillors should the number elected justify it. This would be provided in addition to any training needs which emerge as part of new councillors completing personal development plans.
- 3.6 Training sufficient numbers of councillors to take part in Licensing Sub-Committee meetings presents a particular challenge at present, as the pool of councillors able to take part in the daytime hearings has fallen to a relatively low number. While the membership is sufficient to meet the current workload, officers remain keen that additional councillors be trained to take part in hearings to ensure both continuity in the event of changes in Council membership and greater resilience if meetings are required at short notice. As members of the sub-committee can only be drawn from the Licensing Committee, this area will continue to be considered and monitored at meetings of that committee.
- 3.7 In addition to considering the progress outlined above, members are encouraged to put forward any proposals which would seek to improve either individual member development sessions or to improve the process by which members are able to guide the development of the member development programme.

4. Organisational Impacts

4.1 Finance

Any suggested changes to the delivery of or support for member development must be funded from within its existing budget.

4.2 Legal Implications

None.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That members note the current status of member development.

5.2 That members provide feedback on the operation of member development, including any specific guidance on the training areas to be delivered during 2013/14 and for the new municipal year.

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SUBJECT: PAPERLESS MEETINGS TRIAL

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To consider the outcome of a trial by members into the use of tablet computers in place of printed committee agendas.

2. Background to the Trial

- 2.1 At its meeting of 29 May 2013, the Ethics and Engagement Committee resolved to proceed with a trial of paperless working. Committee members were issued with tablet computers installed with the Modern.Gov software. The tablet application allows councillors and members of the public to download committee agendas and minutes from the majority of Lincolnshire councils, including the City of Lincoln Council. This includes access to joint committees such as the Shared Revenues and Benefits Joint Committee (hosted by Lincoln) and the Central Lincolnshire Joint Strategic Planning Committee (hosted by North Kesteven District Council). Dual-hatted members are also able to access Lincolnshire County Council meeting information through the application.
- 2.2 Members agreed at the outset of the trial to receive all public committee agendas via their tablet computer rather than receiving a printed copy. The potential advantages of paperless working include reduced printing and postage cost, environmental benefits through reduced use of paper, and savings in officer time spent in printing agendas.
- 2.3 As part of the trial members were requested to consider their experience of using the tablets and provide feedback to officers in order for the Committee to consider the findings of the trial as a whole.

3. Trial Outcomes

3.1 Training

The iPads were issued to councillors by Democratic Services Officers, who gave members an initial run through using the iPads and the committee agenda application. Since that time any additional guidance has been provided as and when requested by councillors.

3.2 Ease of Use (Tablet Computer)

Members experienced some initial problems with using tablet computers including:

- Connecting to wireless internet connections at home and at City Hall.
- Orientating tablet computers to view landscape agendas when using a

- physical keyboard.
- Holding the tablet computer while standing to speak at Full Council meetings.

Overall feedback provided to Democratic Services regarding the devices issued has been positive and initial concerns regarding the battery life and portability appear not to have been borne out. The issues outlined above can primarily be resolved through changes to working practices or additional training.

3.3 Ease of Use (Committee Papers Software)

Feedback from members regarding using the Mod.Gov tablet application has been broadly positive, with particular emphasis on the ease with which councillors have adapted to reading papers on tablet computers. A number of comments regarding the application overall are provided for members' consideration:

- There is a need for members to use the software sufficiently frequently to be able to make effective use of it.
- Access to alternative document viewers including thumbnail views of the agenda would be useful for some agendas.

3.4 Security

In order to ensure the security of data held on the tablet computers, the devices have been set to lock if unused for 5 minutes. This setting has provided challenges to members using the tablet computers in meetings, as the delays caused by having repeatedly to log-in can disrupt the flow of the meeting. The setting has been chosen for 5 rather than 15 minutes in accordance with the Cabinet Office's secure email Code of Connection. At members' request, a small number of other councils using tablet computers for committee agendas were contacted to discuss the arrangements in place elsewhere. While noting the security risks associated with all computers, the shortest screen lock time in place at the local authorities consulted was 15 minutes.

In addition, while the initial intent for the trial had been to test only the public functions of any agendas, some members felt that receiving only the first part of agendas excluding exempt information prevented them from using the tablet computer to its greatest extent. As such, work has been undertaken to allow councillors to access exempt information through the Modern.Gov application. The application will continue to prevent public access to any secure information but will presently allow councillors to access all of the information usually accessible through the Council's internal network. There are also opportunities for internal meetings attended by councillors to be transferred onto the Modern.Gov platform if required.

3.5 Additional Uses

As members are aware, the tablet computers have been issued primarily with a view to saving costs on printed agendas. In order to maximise these savings, any additional software, including access to Council emails and remote working, was not included with the trial device. For members' information, the cost of providing access to the Council's full network would be around £200 per device as a result of the additional Microsoft Office licensing costs. This additional cost would reduce the likely savings from paperless working.

- 3.6 However, if tablet computers were used for a wide variety of uses this additional cost could potentially be justified. Some other potential uses include:
- Giving councillors access to their email in a more convenient manner, allowing for better communication with residents and officers.
 - Access to social media outlets, such as Facebook and Twitter, allowing direct communication with service users, particularly with younger residents who might otherwise have less direct contact with councillors.
 - Reporting details of problems directly to officers using the camera on the tablet computer.
- 3.7 Equally, there remains the possibility of members being able to access their emails and calendar directly through a tablet computer, rather than logging in via the Citrix system. This option is likely to be considerably less expensive and more user-friendly for councillors, although its adoption would be subject to any applications meeting the required security standard.

4. Next Steps

- 4.1 Having concluded the trial, members are requested to consider any appropriate action which should be taken with regard to the future implementation of paperless working.
- 4.2 Members will be aware that the tablet computers issued for the trial were provided on a temporary basis pending the trial's outcome. Any changes made on a permanent basis regarding the issuing of ICT equipment would require a change to the Elected Member ICT Policy (attached as **Appendix A**). In particular, any changes recommended to the Executive should have regard to the position of councillors who have not taken part in the trial or who previously accepted a tablet computer in lieu of either an allowance or a Council-issued laptop.
- 4.3 Based on the apparent success of the trial it is suggested that members consider recommending a change to the Elected Member ICT Policy to allow councillors who agree to receive all committee papers via the tablet application to receive a tablet device for this purpose. Any retention of this device would be contingent upon continuing not to receive printed agenda papers.

5. Organisational Impacts

5.1 Finance

Funding for the tablet computers used during the trial was provided from a number of different budgets. Funding for any additional devices could be justified and met on the basis of the proposal in paragraph 4.3, while reductions in the printing budget are likely to be sufficient for new devices on an ongoing basis. Any funding agreement would be subject to ongoing review by the relevant budget-holder.

5.2 Legal Implications

As noted previously, any members receiving electronic agendas will be requested to sign a document requesting that their Council summons be delivered to City Hall, rather than their home address. This reflects the unusual position of Council meetings within the Local Government Act 1972, which requires that printed papers are formally served on members. Members may also wish to note that the Department for Communities and Local Government has recently written to

another local authority stating that while reform to the relevant law might be beneficial, it is not a government priority at this time.

6. Recommendation

6.1 Members are recommended to consider the outcome of the paperless working trial and resolve a suitable conclusion to the trial having regard to:

- Whether paperless working is suitable for general use by councillors.
- Requesting any extension in the screen lock period for tablet computers used at committee meetings.
- Recommending any necessary changes to the Executive in order to amend the Elected Member ICT Policy

ELECTED MEMBERS ICT POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The City of Lincoln Council promotes the effective use of ICT (Information Communication Technology) by its Elected Members. The implementation of more effective ICT for Members will assist the execution of their duties and help to provide improved community leadership.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all Elected Members of the Council and aims to protect Members and the Council against legal challenge, criminal liability and damage to reputation. This is supported by four key objectives, which are;
- i) To prevent Council resources from being used to promote political activity;
 - ii) To prevent the Council's name from being used to promote a Members personal or business interests;
 - iii) To protect the Council's private, personal and sensitive information from all threats, whether internal or external, deliberate or accidental;
 - iv) To prevent unnecessary cost being incurred by the Council.
- 1.3 The use of all ICT equipment or systems provided, or made accessible, by the Council is subject to this policy. Any Member wishing to use the Council's ICT equipment and systems is required to undertake in writing that they observe and will comply with this policy.
- 1.4 ICT services and support are provided for Members through the Business Development and IT Team.

2. ICT Points of Contact

- 2.1 The IT helpdesk is the first point of contact for all ICT enquires, queries and support problems.

Operating hours: Monday –Thursday 08:00 – 17:00
Friday 08:00 – 16:30

Contact Details Tel: 01522 873327
Email: ithelpdesk@lincoln.gov.uk

To order consumables or reimbursement please contact Legal & Democratic Services.

For all other ICT issues or concerns, please contact:

Matt Smith, Business Development & IT Manager
Tel: 01522 873308
Email: matt.smith@lincoln.gov.uk

3. ICT Equipment

Hardware

- 3.1 Members may choose to either use their own ICT equipment or take advantage of council provided hardware.

Council Issued Hardware

- 3.2.1 The following choice of Council provided devices for accessing systems are available to Members;

- i) Desktop PC (complete with monitor, keyboard, mouse), or;
- ii) Laptop

Both of which will be encrypted and will require a password to be entered when the device is turned on.

Due to advances in technology alternative hardware may become available for use by Members, the Council retains the right to offer alternative hardware to those shown above should the situation arise.

- 3.2.2 As optional extras the following items can also be provided:

- i) Monochrome laser printer
- ii) Consumables (there will be a limit on usage reimbursed or provided)

- 3.2.3 The devices provided by the IT Section will be installed with the current standard security software that will be configured to regularly update virus and malware definitions. In order for these updates to occur Members should ensure that they regularly connect to the Council's network or that they submit their device to the IT Section on a regular basis.

- 3.2.4 The software and ICT equipment will be installed in the Members home at the Council's expense. The Member will be expected to provide sufficient room for the equipment, sufficient power sockets and an internet connection in the immediate vicinity.

- 3.2.5 The software and ICT equipment will be maintained, replaced and repaired as necessary at the Council's expense. This includes office consumables such as printer cartridges and paper, with a limit on usage.

Member's own hardware or any other device

- 3.3.1 Members may choose to provide their own ICT equipment e.g. desktop PC, laptop and printer. However they should be aware that only ICT equipment and software supplied by the Council will be supported. If non-Council equipment is used then the Council will not provide repairs, maintenance etc.
- 3.3.2 A Member could also use a computer provided to them by their employer to access the Council's systems if they wish, subject to the employer's agreement and appropriate security being in place.
- 3.3.3 For those Members who wish to provide their own ICT equipment a flat rate annual allowance will be made available to allow for the depreciation of the equipment and eventual replacement thereof.
- 3.3.4 The Council reserves the right to only allow certain types of computer, for example, devices other than relatively recent PC's/laptops running Windows operating systems are unlikely to be acceptable.
- 3.3.5 Where a Member accesses the Council's systems from a non Council provided device they must ensure that the device being used to access the Council's systems has appropriate security software installed and that this software has been regularly updated, in line with the Council's Mobile Working and IT Security Policies.
- 3.3.6 In order to access the Council's systems from a Member's own device or any other device that device will need to be configured with software provided by the IT Section.
- 3.3.7 When using their own device Member's are still entitled to be provided with or reimbursed for office consumables such as printer cartridges and paper, however there will be a limit on usage.

Access to Systems

- 3.4.1 When using their own device Members will be required to access the Council's systems via the Citrix Access Portal. This will require a two-stage process for logging into the Citrix session, firstly using their Windows username and password and secondly with a text message code delivered to a mobile phone.
- 3.4.2 Access to the Council's systems using a Council issued device will in the first instance be via a Virtual Private Network (VPN) connection. Members will then have a choice whether to access the systems via the Citrix Access Portal as per 3.4.1 or alternatively all applications can be installed on the device and it can be operated on a standalone basis (FAT Client). This choice of options is likely to be determined by the mobility requirements of the Member.

- 3.4.3 Members should be aware that if they choose to utilise their Council owned device as a FAT client device that the support provided by the IT Section will not be able to be provided on a remote basis and will require the device to be returned to the IT Section in order to resolve on issues that may occur.
- 3.4.4 It is not possible to store documents on the hard drive of the computer (locally) when logging on via a Citrix connection, neither using a Council supplied or own device. Members will be provided with a personal network drive and any data stored here will be secure and backed up.
- 3.4.5 Any information that is held locally on a Council supplied or Member's own equipment, outside of the Citrix session, will not be backed up and Members are advised to back up any such personal data. The Council accepts no liability or responsibility for the loss of any such data.

Broadband Provision

- 3.5.1 Members may choose to either use their own broadband provision or take advantage of a council managed and funded broadband service either via mobile broadband (data card), wireless or standard Ethernet cable.
- 3.5.2 Regardless of the option chosen for broadband provision, wherever a Council device is supplied a Remote Access Point (RAP) will be required; this will be provided by the Council.
- 3.5.3 For those Members who wish to use their own broadband provision a flat rate allowance per annum will be made available, reflecting the costs of equivalent council provision. Any wireless router to be used for the broadband provision must also be supplied by the Member.
- 3.5.4 For those Members who take advantage of a council supplied broadband, this will only be available where it is provisioned upon a telephone line (installed and paid for at the Council's expense), separate from any existing personal fixed telephony provision. The Council will provide any wireless router required should they provide and manage the broadband service.
- 3.5.5 Private usage of a Council managed and provided broadband service is permissible however Members should be aware that in certain circumstances the private usage of a Council provided broadband service may be subject to a personal taxation charge. Guidance can be found at www.hmrc.gov.uk.
- 3.5.6 The Council will not support or be responsible for any other device connected to a wireless router regardless of whether the router is supplied by the Council or an own device.

4. Training/Development

- 4.1 The Council will provide training opportunities at the Council's expense on all aspects of Council related use of the software/hardware and related issues, such as Data Protection.

5. Acceptable Use

- 5.1 Council ICT equipment is provided for Members to use in connection with Council business.

- 5.2 Council business means matters relating to a Member's duties as an elected councillor, as an Executive member, as a member of a committee, sub committee, working party or as a Council representative on another body or organisation.

- 5.3 Council ICT equipment is available to enable;

- i) Communications with individual Members of the public, other Members, officers, and government officials in connection with those duties set out above.
- ii) To facilitate discussion by a political group of the Council, so long as it relates mainly to the work of the Council and not the political party.

- 5.4 Members must also note the General Principles in the Members Code of Conduct with particular regard to the following principles;

- i) Members should uphold the law, and on all occasions act in accordance with trust that public is entitled to place in them;
- ii) Members should do whatever they are able to do to ensure that their Authorities use their resources prudently and in accordance with the law.

- 5.5 ICT equipment should not be used;

- i) In a manner that breaches the Members Code of Conduct. The Code makes it clear that when using the resources of the Council Members must;
 - a. Act in accordance with the Council's reasonable requirements;
 - b. Ensure that such resources are not used improperly for political purposes (including party political purposes).

- ii) This means that the use of the ICT equipment for purely party political purposes, designing and distributing party political material produced for publicity purposed and support of any political party or group activities, elections and campaigning is likely to amount to a breach of the Code of Conduct.
 - iii) For any illegal activities which may bring the Council into disrepute.
 - iv) For any purpose which is inconsistence with this policy.
- 5.6 The following do not constitute Council business and Council resources should not be used;
- i) Communications for constituency party meetings, ward party meeting, etc. or letters to party member collectively or in their capacity as party Members.
 - ii) Documents relating to the policy and organisation of political parties, particularly regarding the conduct of elections.
- 5.7 The ICT equipment provided for Members is intended to assist the Member in his or her duties as a councillor. It can be used for limited personal use if this does not degrade the performance of the equipment or contravene section 1.2 of this policy, providing that the primary use of the equipment remains for conducting council business. However, the equipment is limited to software provided by the Council.
- 5.8 All of the ICT equipment and software provided to Members remains the property of the Council. Members therefore have an obligation to ensure that they;
- i) take reasonable care to safeguard ICT equipment and software supplied;
 - ii) follow the instructions given by the Council, authorised contractors and manufacturers of the equipment as to its use and not allow it to be interfered with;
 - iii) protect ICT equipment against theft and unauthorised access;
 - iv) do not install any software on the ICT equipment. If Members require any software for their work, they must consult the IT Section;
 - v) do not modify your ICT equipment in any way; this includes any amendments to the hardware and software configuration;
 - vi) maintain the ICT equipment in working condition and report any faults to the IT Section as soon as is reasonably practical;

vii) allow reasonable access to the equipment for regular inspection, maintenance, upgrades or remedial work. The Council is required by legislation to inspect any provided device at least once within a 12 month period;

viii) otherwise comply with the terms of this policy and any other Information Management Policy and IT Security Policy.

6. IT Security Policy

6.1 It is necessary that Members comply with and have a working understanding of the Council's IT Security Policy and supporting guidance notes, which apply to all ICT equipment and systems.

6.2 The key elements of the IT Security Policy and supporting guidance notes are detailed in the following sections.

Email and Internet Acceptable Usage Guidance Notes

6.3.1 Email and Internet is provided to Members as a means of improving communications, knowledge and effectiveness at work. The Council's email and Internet facilities are intended for business use, although occasional personal use is permitted. Nevertheless, all usage of the Council's email and Internet facilities must be regarded as the property of the Council and must not be regarded as private.

6.3.2 Use of email and Internet access introduces security threats such as malicious code attached e.g. viruses, unsolicited or undesirable email, fraudulent attempts to acquire sensitive information such as passwords and credit card details, unauthorised content, and breaches of legislation e.g. computer misuse and copyright legislation. All Members are responsible for complying with the Council's Email and Internet Acceptable Use Guidance.

6.3.3 The Council will provide Members with a Council email address in the format "name@lincoln.gov.uk", this must be used for all emails conducting or in support of official City of Lincoln Council business.

6.3.4 Non work emails e.g. webmail, hotmail, must not be used to conduct or support official City of Lincoln Council business, these forms of email will not be supported by the Council and access to them will not be available through Council provided channels.

6.3.5 Members must ensure that any emails containing sensitive information must be sent from an official council email. Any emails containing PROTECT or RESTRICTED information must be sent from a GCSx email. If Members believe they need to do this they should contact the IT Helpdesk.

- 6.3.6 No forwarding of emails to personal email addresses will be permitted, either automatic or manual forwarding by officers or Members.
- 6.3.7 The legal status of an email message is similar to any other form of written communication. Consequently, any e-mail message sent from a facility provided to conduct or support official City of Lincoln Council business should be considered to be an official communication from the Council.
- 6.3.8 All official external e-mail must carry the official Council disclaimer. The disclaimer below is the current standard approved by the Council and is automatically added to outbound emails;

This transmission is intended for the named addressee(s) only and may contain sensitive or protectively marked material up to RESTRICTED and should be handled accordingly. Unless you are the named addressee (or authorised to receive it for the addressee) you may not copy or use it, or disclose it to anyone else. If you have received this transmission in error please notify the sender immediately. All GCSX traffic may be subject to recording and/or monitoring in accordance with relevant legislation.

This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and intended solely for the use of the individual or entity to whom they are addressed. Under the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 the contents of this email may be disclosed. The City of Lincoln Council reserves the right to monitor both sent and received emails. If you have received this email in error please notify the system manager who can be contacted at ITHelpdesk@lincoln.gov.uk

- 6.3.9 Under no circumstances should Members use email and Internet facilities for;
- i) Illegal or malicious use, including downloading or transmitting copyright material
 - ii) Accessing, sorting or transferring illegal, pornographic or obscene material
 - iii) The deliberate propagation of computer viruses, or use of the Internet to attempt unauthorised access to any other IT resource.
 - iv) Access to or distribution of material, which does not comply with the Council's Equality and Diversity policy.
 - v) For potentially libellous or defamatory purposes.

- 6.3.10 Access to certain categories of website will be restricted e.g. adult, drugs & alcohol, gambling etc (if access to a blocked site is required this can be overridden by contacting the IT helpdesk), subject to the site being used for appropriate Council business.
- 6.3.11 Members must be aware that the Council reserves the right to use monitoring tools to enforce the Council's policies and to produce periodic reports detailing use of its E-mail and Internet facilities.

Information Security Incident Management Guidance Note

- 6.4.1 An incident is an event that could cause damage to the Council's reputation, service delivery or even an individual. This could be a lost laptop or paper case file, a virus on the network or a damaged piece of hardware.
- 6.4.2 Members should report any incidents or suspected incidents immediately by contacting the IT Section.
- 6.4.3 Members need to keep evidence of security breaches or system incidents, in case these are required later.
- 6.4.4 This process also applies to lost paper records as well as data on computers.

Software Guidance Note

- 6.5.1 Members must not install or configure any software on the Council's ICT equipment. If Members require any software for their work, they must consult the IT Helpdesk.
- 6.5.2 All standard software installed on Council issued ICT equipment is correctly licensed and the Council will hold the details and records. These licenses apply to a single copy of the software on one machine. The software must not be copied to any other machine.

IT Access Guidance Note

- 6.6 The security of ICT equipment is the responsibility of each Member as its 'custodian'. Access to the Council's information systems via ICT equipment is subject to password security. Members must ensure that no one other than themselves is given access to those council information systems and must take all reasonable steps to ensure their password remains confidential.

Removable Media Guidance Note

- 6.7.1 It is the Council's policy to prohibit the use of all removable media devices. Removable media devices are electronic items usually used for storing or transporting data, for example a computer disk (CD or DVD),

USB memory stick, MP3 player, external hard drive or a camera memory card. The use of removable media devices will only be approved if there is a valid business case for its use.

- 6.7.2 All data stored on removable media must be encrypted where possible.
- 6.7.3 Any removable media device that has not been supplied by the IT Section must not be used. All ICT equipment supplied will by default have removable media facilities disabled unless there is a valid business case.

Legal Responsibilities Guidance Note

The Data Protection Act

- 6.8.1 The Data Protection Act (DPA), 1998 is concerned with the direct use of personal information, whether that information is a manual record or processed on a computer system. DPA applies to all types of personal information; this includes information which may not be thought to be confidential.
- 6.8.2 Personal data means data that relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data, or a combination of that data and other information which is in the possession of the Council. It also includes any expression of opinion about the individual.
- 6.8.3 The Act itself has 8 principles, all of which must be adhered to when handling personal information. Although all of the principles apply to information security, principle 7 focuses solely on the security aspect of handling personal information.
- 6.8.4 Members usually access the personal data of others in three different situations:
 - i) Viewing personal information held by the Council for a specific purpose, such as a tenancy file.
 - ii) Viewing and storing the personal information of their constituents through surgeries or complaints.
 - iii) Viewing personal information held by their political parties about Members.
- 6.8.5 Members should ensure that personal information held for council purposes should not be used for political or electioneering purposes.
- 6.8.6 Members should also be aware that the unauthorised processing or disclosure of such information is prohibited under the Act and the Member is responsible for ensuring that there is no such unauthorised disclosure of information from the ICT equipment.

- 6.8.7 If the Council fails to abide by DPA, it could be prosecuted and fined up to £500,000. However, the Act also imposes personal liability, so if a Member is found to be contravening the Act, he/she too could be prosecuted. In addition both the Council or individual officers or Members could face a civil action for damages for distress if there is a breach of the DPA.
- 6.8.8 All Members must comply with DPA, and the Council's supporting DPA policies, procedures and guidelines. It is the Member's responsibility to be familiar with and to adhere to the requirements of DPA.
- 6.8.9 Members are advised to read the Information Commissioner's *Advice for the elected and prospective members of local authorities* for further details:
http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/data_protection/practical_application/advice_elected_and_prospective_members_local_authorities.pdf.pdf

The Freedom of Information Act

- 6.9.1 The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) gives a right of public access to information held by the Council. In terms of the Freedom of Information Act:
- i) Individual Members are not authorities for the purposes of the FOIA.
 - ii) Correspondence between Members or information held by a Member for their own private, political or representative purposes will not usually be covered by the Act.
 - iii) Information received, created or held by a Member on behalf of the Council will be covered by the Act, for example, where a Member is acting in an executive role as part of the Council Executive.
 - iv) Information created or received by a Member, but held on a council's computer system or at its premises will only be covered by the Act if it is held for the council's own business.
 - v) Members are advised to read the Information Commissioner's *Information produced or received by councillors* for guidance on what information held or produced by Members can be requested and disclosed under the Freedom of Information Act.
http://www.ico.gov.uk/upload/documents/library/freedom_of_information/detailed_specialist_guides/fep109_information_produced_or_received_by_councillors_v1.0.pdf.

6.9.2 If Members require advice or assistance on the provisions of the Data Protection Act or the Freedom of Information Act they should contact Legal & Democratic Services Manager or Head of Corporate Support Services.

7. Health and Safety

7.1 Members are required to ensure they use all facilities with due regard to their own and others' health and safety. Members should be aware of how they position their equipment to minimize hazards such as trailing power cables, glare for lighting or posture when working. Members should contact Legal & Democratic Services for arrange further advice regarding best practice for health and safety.

8. Insurance

8.1 A proportion of the cost of replacement following theft or damage of the Council's ICT equipment is covered under the Council's current insurance arrangements. There is an expectation from the insurer that reasonable care is taken in the use and security of equipment, particularly portable laptops, failure to do so may invalidate any insurance claim. The Council may, at its discretion, require the Member to pay all or some of the cost incurred, if it resulted from their wilful neglect.

- i) Security – reasonable care must be exercised in order to prevent theft, loss or damage at all times. Specifically any mobile devices, e.g. laptops must not be left unattended. An appropriate carrying case should be used to prevent damage to the equipment. All ICT equipment should be kept out of sight overnight in secure location.
- ii) Transit – ICT equipment must be kept out of sight and secured in a locked boot where available. ICT equipment must not be left in an unattended vehicle and must be removed from the vehicle overnight. When using hotel accommodation Members should consider the use of the hotel reception safe when a mobile device is not in use and where not available, the use of a room safe or lockable cabinets within the room.
- iii) Travelling abroad – it is not envisaged that there will be a regular requirement to take Council provide mobile devices abroad. In such cased mobile devices must be taken as hand luggage. Legal & Democratic Services should be advised, in good time, prior to oversees travel in order to ensure insurance arrangements are in place. Members should also consult the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (<http://www.fc.gov.uk/en/travel-and-living-abroad/>) website for further guidance prior to travel.

- 8.2 The Council accepts no responsibility for the theft or damage of the Members own ICT equipment and Members should ensure that they have their own appropriate insurance arrangements in place.

9. Privacy

- 9.1 It is the policy of the Council that email and internet use may be monitored. Inappropriate use or content will be brought to the attention of the Monitoring Officer and may result in a referral to the Standards Committee. The Council reserves the right to inspect the equipment at any time. Members are required to give Council officers access at any reasonable time for inspection and audit, which may be undertaken remotely and without notice to the Member.

- 9.2 Any inappropriate use made of Council ICT equipment will be considered to have been made with the knowledge and co-operation of its custodian.

- 9.3 All incoming and outgoing data (both internet and email) is automatically monitored and filtered. Any suspect traffic is quarantined and IT services notified of the sender and intended recipient.

10. Confidentiality

- 10.1 Members may be able to access confidential council information using the ICT equipment and are responsible for ensuring the continuing security of any such confidential information that they receive, including the security of any storage of such information on the computer.

- 10.2 Members are reminded of their obligations under the Council's Code of Conduct for Members not to disclose confidential information to any third party.

11. Restriction of Use

- 11.1 The Council reserves the right to restrict the use of ICT equipment if it has reason to believe that the use of the ICT equipment is likely to be in breach of the Council's IT Security Policy and supporting guidance. In particular, the Council reserves the right to:

- i) remove or disable any software or equipment;
- ii) remove any information stored on the computer.

12. Return and Recovery of Equipment

- 12.1 All ICT equipment and software assigned remains the property of the Council. The Council reserves the right to require the Member to return the ICT equipment at any time and the right to recover the ICT equipment from the Member.

12.2 Any Member to whom ICT equipment has been supplied and ceased to hold office, for whatever reason, will be required to return it all to Legal & Democratic Services within two weeks of ceasing office. All information held on the equipment will be deleted and the equipment maybe re-issued

MEMBERS AGREEMENT

I, Councillor....., have read and understood the Members ICT Policy as set out above and hereby agree to comply with the terms of the policy.

Signed.....

Date.....

In the presence of..... (Officer of City of Lincoln Council)

Signed.....

SUBJECT: LOCAL DEMOCRACY WEEK UPDATE

REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

LEAD OFFICER: CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 Local Democracy Week is a pan-European event intended to promote young people's engagement with democracy. Following consideration at their previous meeting, members requested further details regarding the Council's involvement with the project.

2. Background

- 2.1 Local Democracy Week 2013 will take place between 14 and 20 October. At the previous meeting of the Committee, members noted the challenge faced in arranging suitable events at relatively short notice. As such, Local Democracy Week 2013 has been targeted as an opportunity primarily to develop initial ideas with a view to increased activity and effectiveness in 2014.
- 2.2 Members approved proposals relating to lesson plans promoting awareness of local government and public involvement with the Council, while also suggesting increased use of social media to reach younger people. In particular, members proposed that the Leader's weekly question-and-answer session on Twitter should be advertised to schools with a view to holding a special event during Local Democracy Week.
- 2.3 For members' information, the following proposals were brought to the last meeting of the Committee and are now being developed for use as part of Local Democracy Week:

Democracy lesson plans

Lesson plans will be developed and distributed for Local Democracy Week 2014 which would teach children about local democracy, elections, and councillors. The process is likely to set in place a template lesson which could be easily distributed and potentially amended for future years. Where possible, officers will seek to draw upon existing resources and the advice of teaching professionals in compiling suitable materials. In addition, pupils will be encouraged to engage directly with the democratic process by compiling questions to put in person to an appropriate Full Council meeting. This would encourage pupils both to consider the responsibilities of councillors and also to think about how, for example, they can improve their own neighbourhoods.

2.4 What does democracy mean to you?

Fixing the interest of primary schoolchildren upon an abstract concept such as

democracy could represent a challenge with some of the usual methods employed by other local authorities during Local Democracy Week. With this in mind, a poster-designing competition will be developed and promoted asking children to produce a poster showing what democracy means to them. Small prizes can be awarded to the winners in addition to a possible visit to the Guildhall to meet members of the civic party.

It would also be possible to incorporate winning entries as the front page of the agenda for Full Council, thereby providing a visual reminder of the link between young people and local democracy. Entries could also potentially be displayed in the entrance lobby to the committee rooms.

3. Summary of Activities

- 3.1 As noted by members at the previous meeting and further to discussions with the chair, timescales for activities relating to promoting democracy lesson plans in schools were agreed to be particularly challenging in view of the difficulty in contacting schools during the summer holidays. Without active input from teaching professionals and sufficient notice for lesson plans to be promoted and implemented there is a risk that any lesson plans distributed would not be broadly adopted.
- 3.2 As the intention for increased democratic engagement with schools is a long-term continuing goal, there is a risk that under-prepared material would negatively affect school's receptiveness in future years. As such, following discussions with the chair, this element of the programme will continue to be developed and monitored by the Committee over the coming year with a view to adoption as part of Local Democracy Week 2014.
- 3.3 In addition to the proposals outlined above for implementation in 2014, the Committee also suggested and agreed that the Leader would host a special version of his regular Twitter broadcast aimed at engaging with young people. Details of this are provided below. Officers have been working with the Communications Team to organise and promote a suitable event, based around the opportunities and barriers for young people to engage with their communities and local democracy.
- 3.4 Promotional activities are being focused upon schools within Lincoln; each secondary school will be contacted to pass on information regarding the event and how pupils are able to engage with it. Equally, details will be promoted to the local media and within the Council's internal news system for any staff with school-age children who would like to take part.
- 3.5 In recognition that access to Twitter may be limited at some schools, the Council is also developing a system to allow children to submit questions and comments via the Council's website without the need for a Twitter account. While the focus is being placed upon promoting the Twitter session as a special event, it is intended that the weekly sessions already carried out by the Leader will continue and so this could widen the ongoing audience for this form of engagement.
- 3.6 Officers have also been in contact with the Parliament Outreach Services at the Houses of Parliament in Westminster with regard to Parliament Week which takes

place from 15-21 November 2013. Parliament Week is described as a 'UK-wide programme of events that aim to engage, inspire and connect people with Parliament and democracy'. As members will note, this event shares a similar theme with Local Democracy Week and takes place approximately one month later. As such, officers are currently minded to focus attention upon Local Democracy Week on an ongoing basis given the significant likelihood of duplication between the two programmes. However, there would certainly be benefits to incorporating some of the materials and broader themes for Parliament Week within the future Local Democracy Week agenda.

4. Organisational Impacts

4.1 Finance

All proposed events and activities can be funded within existing budgets. As there is no discrete budget available for Local Democracy Week, activities have been planned according to the funds available and the need to ensure maximum value for money.

4.2 Legal Implications

There are no legal implications to this report.

5. Recommendation

5.1 That members note the work undertaken with regard to Local Democracy Week.

5.2 That members offer any views on maximising or improving the effectiveness of planned events and activities for Local Democracy Week 2013 or the coming year.

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SUBJECT:	WORK PROGRAMME UPDATE
REPORT BY:	DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
LEAD OFFICER:	CAROLYN WHEATER – ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (LEGAL AND CORPORATE SUPPORT SERVICES)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To put forward the current Ethics and Engagement Committee work programme for consideration by members.

2. Work Programme Summary

- 2.1 The work programme is attached as **Appendix A**, and was agreed at the meeting of 29 May 2013.
- 2.2 Members are encouraged to put forward any proposals for relevant matters of concern or interest to them or the residents of their ward which the Ethics and Engagement Committee may be able to consider.

3. Changes Made to the Work Programme

- 3.1 At the meeting of 29 May 2013, the work programme for 2013/14 was agreed. Work on the three primary strands of the Committee's work has been staggered throughout the year. There is currently flexibility within the work programme to react to changing priorities as necessary.
- 3.2 In addition, members determined to monitor the development of proposals for Local Democracy Week as considered elsewhere on this agenda.

4. Organisational Impacts

- 4.1 Finance
There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.
- 4.2 Legal Implications
Any additions to the work programme should be made in accordance with the scope of the Committee as established within its terms of reference.

5. Recommendation

- 5.1 That the Committee consider the work programme and propose any suitable changes if necessary.
- 5.2 That the Committee consider items scheduled for the next meeting and any necessary arrangements relating to them.

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Ethics and Engagement Committee Work Programme 2013/14**29 May 2013**

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Revised Terms of Reference	To highlight the terms of reference agreed by Council on 16 April 2013.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the changes to the operation of the Committee.
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the issues raised and consider a suitable response if required.
Paperless Meetings Trial	To approve details of the trial already agreed in principle at the previous meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider and endorse an approach for the trial of paperless working with elected committee members.
Work Programme Update	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To agree the work programme. To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

30 July 2013

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To note the issues raised and consider suitable a suitable response if required.
Increasing Democratic Engagement with Young People	Following discussions with pupils and teachers from a local school at a recent meeting, plans for member panels interacting with students are being developed for members' consideration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To consider the format for any future member panels taking place in local schools.
Webcasting Cost-Benefit Analysis	Following discussion at a previous meeting, to consider the findings of research into the operation of webcasting at neighbouring councils, and the relative costs and	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To judge the relative costs and benefits of webcasting public committee meetings.

	benefits of adopting a similar system.	
Local Democracy Week	Local Democracy Week is a pan-European event intended to promote people's engagement with democracy. Following consideration at the previous meetings, members requested further details regarding possible involvement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To investigate the costs and benefits of increasing the Council's engagement with Local Democracy Week
European Citizens' Electoral Turnouts	As part of a broader investigation into turnout rates in local elections, members requested details regarding the relative proportion of European Union citizens taking part in elections set against the rates for British citizens.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider whether a disparity in voter turnout exists and any appropriate action which may be taken.
Work Programme Update	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To agree the work programme. ▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

1 October 2013

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To note the issues raised and consider suitable a suitable response if required.
Civic Party Guidance	Following consideration of a relevant code of conduct breach in another local authority, members requested details of the current guidance in place for the Council's civic party.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the fitness of guidance offered to members of the Council's civic party.
Encouraging Electoral Engagement	Turnout in Lincoln's local government elections, in common with many other areas of the country, is often below 30%, meaning that the majority of electors are choosing not to exercise their right to vote, while others entitled to vote may not even be registering to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To examine voter registration and electoral turnout, and to discuss the manner in which this can be improved.
Local Democracy Week	To update members on the plans for Local Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the arrangements made

Update	Week 2013.	and recommend any suitable changes
Member Development Update	Member development has become increasingly important in recent years as the Council seeks to ensure elected members have the skills and knowledge to perform their roles as effectively as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the current provision of member development and offer guidance on its future operation.
Paperless Meetings Trial	Following the planned establishment of a paperless meetings trial as considered on 29 May 2013, members will be invited to feedback and discuss their experiences of paperless working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the outcome of the planned trial of paperless meetings.
The Promotion of Citizenship within Schools	Further to the Increasing Democratic Engagement with Young People item scheduled earlier in 2013/14, it will be necessary to monitor progress and outcomes from the project.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the outcomes of any progress made in trialling member panels with local schools.
Work Programme Update	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To agree the work programme. ▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

9 December 2013

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To note the issues raised and consider suitable a suitable response if required.
Dual Membership of Local Authorities	Within Lincolnshire, councillors can be elected to represent both a lower and an upper-tier council, which potentially raised conflicts of interests in considering certain items.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the suggested guidance and recommend its circulation to councillors.
Local Democracy Week Review	To update members on the events held during Local Democracy Week.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider any positive and negative outcomes from Local Democracy Week with a view to future arrangements.

Succession Planning	Councillors have differing levels of responsibilities, with portfolio holders and committee chairs taking particular additional responsibilities. These posts often benefit from holders having particular skills and knowledge, and there may be a benefit to developing other members to be able assume similar responsibilities if required.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider whether and how succession planning for key councillor posts should be pursued.
Work Programme Update	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To agree the work programme. ▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

3 February 2014

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To note the issues raised and consider suitable a suitable response if required.
Standards Post-Implementation Review	The Localism Act 2011 provided for a considerable revision of arrangements for member standards, including changes to members' declarations of interests and the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the impact of changes to the standards regime introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
Increasing the Diversity of Electoral Candidates	Across the United Kingdom, elected members in local government are often disproportionately drawn from certain sections of the population, with significant disparities existing in areas such as race, gender, and age.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To determine whether any barriers to a broader range of electoral candidates exist that the Council could reasonably address, noting that the Council has no role in influencing the selection process of political parties.
Work Programme Update	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To agree the work programme. ▪ To consider the arrangements for the next meeting.

17 March 2014

Topic	Matter for Consideration	Outcome
Code of Conduct: Cases Review	To examine national developments of relevance to the Members' Code of Conduct.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To note the issues raised and consider suitable a suitable response if required.
Promoting Constructive Debate Within Meetings	The manner in which debate is conducted at meetings has a significant bearing on the quality of outcomes and the working relationships between members and officers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To review the Council's standing orders and to consider the manner in which a high standard of debate can be secured.
Member Development Update	Member development has become increasingly important in recent years as the Council seeks to ensure elected members have the skills and knowledge to perform their roles as effectively as possible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the current provision of member development and offer guidance on its future operation.
Work Programme 2014/15	The Committee's work programme is agreed on an ongoing basis in consultation with the Chair and the Committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To consider the work programme for the next municipal year.

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