

REVIEW OF MEMBER SUPPORT ARRANGEMENTS

**REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD
SOLIHULL MBC**

INDEX

Section	Page No
Foreword:	1
Terms of Reference	2
1. Background	2
2. Base Documentation	3
3. Government View on Community Leadership	3
4. Policy documents - Views on support to members.....	4
5. Comparison with Other Authorities.....	8
6. Analysis of Members' Questionnaire	8
7. Officer Survey.....	12
8. Focus Group Consideration.....	12
9. Preliminary consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board of Member Survey results	14
10. Review Conclusions	15
11. Review Recommendations.....	15
 Appendices	
A Scrutiny Review Scoping Template	16
B Extract from Members Information Booklet.....	17
C Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council - Members' Support Services	21
D Members Allowance - Comparison with West Midlands Councils.....	25
E Member Of The Council- Role Description -	26
E Member Of The Council - Key Competencies.....	27
F Support To Members : Representational Role /	28
G Review Of Support To Councillors In Undertaking Their Representational Role	30
H Members' Survey Results	36

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REPORT OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD

Foreword:

Councillor Mrs D Holl-Allen, Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

I am delighted to introduce this report on the outcomes of a review of Member support arrangements by the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

The Board considered this topic as part of its workplan for the Municipal Year 2006/07 following a need raised by Members to consider in some detail the extent of support given to Members by the Council in delivering their representational role.

The backbone to this Review can be found within the political management changes introduced by the Local Government Act 2000, which saw the introduction of the Executive Decision Making Body and the role of Scrutiny, but it also included an objective to give greater emphasis to the community role of Councillors, particularly those not serving as part of the Executive. The outcomes of research conducted by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister ¹ suggests that this community advocacy role amongst Councillors remains relatively underdeveloped. There could be several reasons for this, but one may be that Members do not feel properly supported to enable them to fully develop this role, hence the need to consider the topic.

More recently the subject has come to the fore in some published works by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, principally entitled 'Vibrant Local Leadership' (supported by a second document entitled 'Citizen Engagement and Public Services: Why Neighbourhoods Matter'). Central to these policy documents is the development of activities at neighbourhood level, which sees elected Councillors as advocates for their communities. Research has shown that there are many examples of outstanding elected individuals who have become clearly identified and recognised as leaders in their local community respected for their ability to advance local causes and make a difference for the communities that make up their electoral ward. While some have argued that the Government has not given sufficient weight to the role of representative Councillors in the running of public services in their locality, it is also the case that traditional Council structures have tended to encourage Councillors to see their role as facing into the Council, rather than facing out to the Community and that the induction and support works for Councillors do not focus sufficiently upon their community role.

The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board has therefore recognised the importance of this topic and the following describes the review that the Board has undertaken and details a number of recommendations for Council consideration.

¹ ODPM 2004 'Operating the new Council Constitutions in English Local Authorities : A process evaluation'

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference for this piece of work is set out in the Scrutiny Scoping document, which is attached at Appendix A.

In brief, the review looks at the developing needs and expectations of Members and whether these needs and expectations are being met effectively.

1. Background

- 1.1 At its meeting in April 2006, the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board gave consideration to prospective subjects to form its work plan for the Municipal Year 2006/07. The topic of the support provided to Members in performing their representational role (ie as a Ward Councillor) featured high on the list of suggested topics.
- 1.2 As a result of the Statutory Annual Council Meeting, changes were made to the structures of Scrutiny Committees and the Members serving upon them. As a consequence the suggested work plan items were reconsidered at a meeting of the Board in June 2006 and the subject was endorsed as a worthy topic for review. At that meeting a Review Scoping document was completed.
- 1.3 The Government's Policy Document, 'Vibrant Local Leadership' identifies the Leadership role of the locally elected Councillor as a community advocate to be a critical one that needs greater emphasis, re-enforcement and support.
- 1.4 There is acknowledgement that the changes brought about by the Local Government Act 2000 have not encouraged development of the Member representative role. The Board agreed that it should undertake a review to consider fully the developing needs of Members in delivering that role and indeed their expectations in terms of level of support.
- 1.5 The Board considered that this was a piece of work that should be conducted by the Board itself; in response to research work undertaken principally through the Senior Scrutiny Officer.
- 1.6 The purpose of the Review was therefore two-fold. Firstly, to be clear as to the full extent of the representative role and following appropriate level of discussion with Members to ensure that Members' needs and expectations are met effectively.
- 1.7 The Board identified that the outcomes and indicators of such a Review would be potential changes to practices and procedures intended to respond to Members' needs and expectations.
- 1.8 The Board identified several methods and information sources in conducting the Review, namely:-
 - The gathering and review of base documentation.
 - Comparative data from similar sized authorities.
 - Survey of Councillors.
 - Survey of key Officers.
 - Interviews/Focus Groups (as necessary, picking up on specific issues raised in surveys).

2. Base Documentation

- 2.1 The Council clearly sets out the level of support that is available for Members in a document that it publishes each year entitled Members' Information. An extract from that document appears at Appendix B.
- 2.2 During the course of the review, the Democratic Services Manager documented a complete list of the support services provided to Members. This document appears at Appendix C

3. Government View on Community Leadership

- 3.1 The Chairman has already indicated in her Foreword to this Report, the importance that the Government has placed upon Local Leadership in helping to
- enable and empower local people and act as their advocate.
 - championing the area: leading the formulation of community strategies, setting out the vision for local community in partnership with other agencies.
 - challenging and scrutinising public services, providing a challenge to the performance of all the delivery agencies in a locality – including the Cabinet itself.
 - decision making; setting priorities for the area and the Council and being accountable for the choices made.
 - shaping services around the needs of the citizen, marshalling resources to best meet the needs of individuals and communities by influencing the mix of services that are brought together from a range of delivery partners.
- 3.2 Taken from the Government's publication, 'Vibrant Local Leadership'. The leadership role of the locally elected Councillor as a community advocate, is seen as a critical one that needs greater emphasis, re-enforcement and support, in particular by:-
- Defining the leadership role of local Councillors more clearly.
 - Considering the relationship with and performance of the Scrutiny function.
 - Encouraging the development of appropriate support for the leadership role of local Councillors.
- 3.3 The opportunities for neighbourhood arrangements must be complementary to democratic legitimacy of Councils and Councillors. Ward Councillors are democratically accountable to all the communities in the Ward that they represent, giving them a unique role. Elective representation involves acting both as advocates and as leaders for the Ward and neighbourhoods.
- 3.4 The Local Councillor acts as an advocate who is speaking up on behalf of individuals and groups in the community to other bodies (including the Council and other public agencies) or to other groups in the community. They can also encourage communities to participate positively in making planning decisions. This would help to deliver the communities vision for the area.
- 3.5 As a Leader, Councillors encourage and enable sections of the community to organise and speak up for themselves and in offering vision and direction, building support for that vision and brokering agreements where necessary to achieve it.

- 3.6 Councillors should be at the heart of any neighbourhood arrangements, stimulating the local voice, listening to it and representing it at a local level. They are vital to maintaining the link between the users and the providers of local public services. Neighbourhood leadership must be a central element of every local Councillor's role, which should include being an effective partner in relevant neighbourhood arrangements. In these roles the local Councillor will need both to work with and through the various neighbourhood arrangements in place and, at times, inspire and lead the development of new arrangements.
- 3.7 In an area such as Solihull where Parish or Town Councils operate, serving a range of purposes and, in some cases, delivering delegated functions, such Councils clearly have a role and democratic mandate to represent their communities. Under these circumstances, Councillors from principal authorities need to work with and through such Parish and Town Councils.
- 3.8 There are also other 'community advocates', whether they be representatives of local service providers, or community groups, there is a role to play in ensuring effective representation of people's concerns. They all have a role in communicating local concerns to Councillors, the Council and to other service providers, such as the Police. Councillors have a role to play in encouraging these 'advocates' to speak up and make their contribution.
- 3.9 With the increase in involvement of a number of 'community advocates' in ways complementary to the leadership role of Councillors, if Councillors lose site of this, others will seek to work around them rather than with them. Equally, in being strong advocates for their communities, Councillors must not lose site of the strategic context for the Council area as a whole.
- 3.10 In essence the challenge for Councillors seeking to lead in their area is similar to the challenge for Councils in terms of leading their entire locality. There is unique legitimacy conferred by democratic election, but it has to be realised by the way that leadership is shared and provided. If partners, within a neighbourhood or a locality, lose confidence in Councillor or Council, then there is little that anyone can do that will, in practice, change those dynamics on the ground.
- 3.11 Local Councillors are also central to championing the interests of both their own areas and the locality through their participation in Scrutiny functions. There are important facets of Scrutiny, which can be led and developed by Councillors in their local areas, for example, particularly in relation to performance review. Neighbourhoods working with local Councillors may be able to trigger action to address failing services within their community. However, local Councillors should be acting on their own volition in scrutinising the delivery of all services in their area and making representations to other service providers where action is needed. Acting collectively, local Councillors can use the Scrutiny function to oversee how Councils and other providers are responding to calls for action by neighbourhoods across the area.

4. Policy documents - Views on support to members

Identified in Supporting Councillors in their Representational Role

- 4.1 The Government's document 'Vibrant Local Leadership' states that the induction support arrangements for Councillors has traditionally focused more upon supporting them in their role at the Town Hall – in being members of committees or in making

decisions or even in exercising their Scrutiny role than it has in supporting Councillors in their representative role.

- 4.2 The document argues that this has shifted to a degree since the Local Government Act 2000 but not markedly in most places.
- 4.3 Councillors can be elected to represent a particular area, with few local networks outside their political party, having to juggle work and family commitments as well as their Council duties and are expected to make immediate sense of all of the local service providers, organisations and individual communities within that area.
- 4.4 The paper suggests that it is important that consideration is given to how resources are used to support Councillors in this local champion role. Suggestions have been made that, at the very least, Councillors induction could, as a matter of routine, include a contact programme with all the relevant public service managers in their Ward and other key partners of the Council relevant to their patch. Moreover, the way that basic administrative, technical and research support could be tailored to support Councillors in playing their local advocate role needs to be considered.
- 4.5 Research in connection with this review has identified suggestions made in policy documents, dating back to the formative years of new management arrangements and in more recent documents, as to how Members should be supported in carrying out their representational role.
- 4.6 The first piece of research is taken from a chapter within a document entitled "Strengthening Local Democracy", published by the ODPM back in the year 2000.

The impact of Members' Allowances

- 4.7 The ability of individuals to stand for Councils and, if elected, take a full part in the work of the authority without significant financial loss, is important if the potential of the constitutions are to be realised. The Members' Allowances Scheme provides an important step in this direction and a number of Councils have taken advantage of it to develop a clearer profile for the work of their Members.
- 4.8 There are a number ways in which an allowances system can be utilised to support local democratic activity. In some authorities allowances have been weighted towards non-executive Councillors in order to recognise and support their role. This would give non-executive Councillors the means to invest the time needed to develop their roles more fully.
- 4.9 As will be shown the responses from the Members' survey, a number commented that the allowances paid in Solihull are insufficient to cover the commitment demanded by the role particularly those with a Portfolio. Whilst it may be argued that the Members' Allowance Scheme is outside the scope of this review, particularly, bearing in mind, that the setting of such payments is on recommendation of an Independent Panel, this review has highlighted the fact that in some Councils allowances have been weighted towards non-executive Councillors in order to recognise and support their role. A survey of Councils in the West Midlands shows that a number of them pay their Scrutiny Chairman a special responsibility allowance equivalent to that of a Cabinet Member. A schedule comparing allowances paid is attached at Appendix D.

Emergence of Role Profiles

- 4.10 An unintended but beneficial outcome of the Members' Allowances process in some Councils has been the sharpening of role profiles or job descriptions for Councillors. These have been developed to give Councillors a greater understanding of the authority's expectation of their role in the new constitutions.
- 4.11 The advantage of these role profiles is that they make explicit what Councillors are expected to do in return for their allowances. It enables the Council to prioritise certain roles and activities in line with its approach to local democratic renewal. Some Councils have gone much further and produced detailed profiles for Councillors in their different roles and contexts, whether it is spelling out the relationship to their local communities, local party, executive Councillors and other structures in the authority.
- 4.12 Councillors' job descriptions for each Member role are being developed by the Council's Member Development Steering Group. A draft document is attached at Appendix E, which sets out a role description and competencies expected of a non-executive Councillor. Members will note the specific references to the Ward role. The adoption of these will give clarity to the various Member roles and should be introduced as quickly as possible.

Resources for Councillors

- 4.13 The new Council constitutions undoubtedly require effective support for Members over and above the traditional administrative support and the Members' Room. In the research conducted for the "Strengthening Local Democracy" policy paper, the authors found a number of authorities that at that stage were beginning to provide Councillors with a range of support, including IT provision, Member development and training programmes, and specific support for their constituency and ward related work. In some Councils this amounted to a comprehensive range of information and advice services.
- 4.14 Some of the examples quoted, particularly in the use of IT facilities, are now old hat.
- 4.15 The document provides examples of innovative and flexible methods of providing IT and communication support to Councillors. In one Authority, Councillors were able to draw down a credit of a £1,000 per annum, such money to be spent as necessary on IT related equipment to assist the role of a Councillor. An example quoted that money had been spent on items such as PCs, scanners, mobile phones, answering machines, internet fax, digital cameras and palm tops.
- 4.16 It was considered that the advantages of such an approach were:-
- increases in efficiency and effectiveness of Member support by only providing the equipment that the individual Councillor requires.
 - allowing Councillors to decide what best suits their needs, such as a digital camera for taking photos of pot holes that can be sent electronically through to the appropriate service department; or a palm top that enables Councillors to make notes immediately after holding surgeries and e-mailing any follow-up actions to the authority immediately.
 - providing demonstrable gains for all Councillors in terms of their roles.
 - it is practical to operate and popular with the Councillors and encourages the practical development of e-local governance.

Councillor Development

- 4.17 As part of the research it was found that local authorities around the country are building member capacity to operate effectively in the new constitutional arrangements by enhancing Members' training and development. This development varied from short information giving seminars, training on skills to more formal programmes. Some Councils are taking particular advantage of the leadership programme sponsored by the IDeA to build a core of Members who can take a lead in the new constitutions.
- 4.18 An example was found in Stroud of training non-executive Councillors in community leadership roles, which had been well received and helpful to Councillors in representing the Authority on external bodies.
- 4.19 Some Councils taking the next step are providing an accredited in-house programme that enables those Councillors that qualify to obtain a post graduate certificate in local governance.
- 4.20 Another relevant document, again issued in 2000, by the Local Government Association, was entitled "Real roles for Members – the role of non-executive Members in the new structures". Part of this paper concentrates on the support given to Members in their representational role and the point is argued that with the change in structures, Members cannot perform their duties effectively if they are not equipped with the necessary tools to do so and an element to this, is having necessary information.
- 4.21 Examples were given where Councils had tried to bridge this gap by developing regular written briefings tailored for each Member, which included information on decisions taken by the Executive and updates from Scrutiny meetings.
- 4.22 Another approach being trialled by a County Council in support of Councillors in their community role, involved middle managers and senior professional staff providing the equivalent of one day per month (from their own time) for an agreed remuneration. The range of issues being dealt with was extensive ie from dial-a-ride schemes to the establishment of a Parish Council.
- 4.23 Another reference document was the IDeA booklet "A Councillor's Guide for 2006/2007". It is argued that to be efficient and effective, Councillors need a range of support services and it is clear from research that all Councils offer support to varied degrees and this may include:-
- office accommodation, such as Members' Rooms, interview rooms, rooms for holding surgeries, public meetings and consultations.
 - secretarial and word processing services.
 - communications facilities – 'phones, PCs or laptops, e-mail, post office support and so-on.
 - information provision for use internally, perhaps to facilitate Scrutiny and externally perhaps to respond to enquiries from constituents.
 - help to manage case work.
 - research facilities.
 - care facilities.
 - training and development.

This paper then goes on to mention elements of support that have been touched on previously, namely, suitable Members' Allowances Scheme, use of information technology and research and information.

- 4.24 This Council has approved a Strategy for Member Development and has appointed an all-party Member development Steering Group to oversee the implementation. The Strategy includes working towards the achievement of the West Midlands Local Government Association Member Development Charter.
- 4.25 The main aim of the Strategy is to ensure Members are provided with training and development opportunities relevant to their specific role within the Council and taking into account the experience and skills they bring from other aspects of their lives. It begins by defining the roles and the competencies Members need to perform effectively, and features a self assessment process whereby any training needs can be identified. Individual; training and development plans will then be produced for all Councillors.

5. Comparison with Other Authorities

- 5.1 Research has been conducted of other Metropolitan Councils as to the range of support services provided by those Authorities.
- 5.2 A table appears at Appendix F, which sets out that comparison.
- 5.3 The most striking observation is that the level of support provided to Members varies widely from Council to Council. However, it is noticeable that Coventry, Walsall and Sandwell provide Members with administrative / clerical support to assist with their casework / research. At present Solihull offers a degree of clerical support (typing etc) but there is rarely any demand for it.

6. Analysis of Members' Questionnaire

- 6.1 As part of the review, Members were issued with a questionnaire by which they were asked to rate the current facilities provided, comment on how many times they contact Officers, rate the personal support to Members, comment on the range and level of information made available to them, how well informed they feel about Ward issues and comment generally on the support given.
- 6.2 A copy of the questionnaire sent to Members is attached at Appendix G and a table showing Members' responses is attached at Appendix H.
- 6.3 What follows is an analysis of those responses.
- 6.4 **Note:** Percentage figures quoted are based on numbers returning the questionnaire. 30 of the 51 Councillors returned the questionnaires. A return of 59%.

Q1 66% of responders are aware of facilities available to assist them in carrying out their representational role.

Q2 Rating of facilities.

Civic Suite 93% of responders felt that facilities in the Civic Suite were satisfactory or above.
Comments made Facilities are under utilised
Message Board should be provided
Should be able to use laptops in meetings. **Note:** – the Civic Suite has a wireless network, which enables access to Egenda during meetings.

Mobile 'phones

Clear from responses that Members generally did not understand this provision. The eligibility is for those in receipt of special responsibility allowances (SRA). Not all SRA holders were aware of the provision.

Members' Stationery

96% of responders felt that the service was satisfactory or above.
One adverse comment over delay in getting printed stationery.

Post

66% of responders felt that this service was satisfactory or above.
Some concerns raised over the accuracy of the service, ie Members receiving other Members' mail. Comments made that mail is sometimes despatched in oversize envelopes (an important point given the new pricing policy) and one Member asked whether pre-paid envelopes could be supplied for sending items to the Council. (This facility is already available). There were a few Members who were not aware of the support available in this area.

Premises used as Surgeries

63% of Members do not make use of such facilities. Members holding surgeries in Library facilities, whilst complimenting the support received from library staff, commented that the arrangements were often not ideal.

Q3. Contact with Officers

- | | |
|---------------------|--|
| Chief Executive | - Large majority monthly or less than monthly. |
| Corporate Directors | - Approximately 50% monthly or less. Others split equally over fortnightly, weekly or daily. Some correlation between Members with special responsibility and regularity of contact. |
| Service Heads | - Contacted more frequently than Corporate Director. Just less than 50% contacting on a weekly basis. Again some correlation between Members with special responsibilities and regularity of contact. |
| Democratic Services | - Contact with Democratic Services staff was fairly evenly split over monthly, fortnightly and weekly. This return may be clouded by contact with such staff through Member meetings rather than support in their representational capacity. |

- Civic Staff - Approximately 50% of contact monthly or less. Next highest frequency weekly, Again return may be clouded by Member attendance at meetings in Civic Suite rather than support to Member in representational role.
- Members' Support Officer - 66% of Members make contact with this Officer either monthly or less. This is likely to reflect Member claims for allowances and/or requests for stationery. Noticeable that a few Members did not know of this Officer or her role.

Q4. Personal Support to Members
Support for Surgeries

73% of Members indicated that they did not hold surgeries and therefore the availability of support was immaterial. An interesting question would be if support were available to assist in organising the holding of surgeries, would there be an increased desire to hold them. Some Members don't hold surgeries owing to lack of suitable premises.

Support for Casework

66% of responders felt that this service was satisfactory or above.

The responses show that the majority of Members find the support that they get from Officers in answering casework queries to be satisfactory or better. However, what isn't clear, and this needs to be explored further, would Members use administrative / clerical support in helping to process casework queries. Some Members clearly thought that this question related to administrative support and commented that "did not realise that this was available."

Member allowances

There was a mixed response to this question. Whilst some Members responded on the basis of the support to Members in processing allowance claims (the main purpose), others took the opportunity to comment that the level of allowances paid at Solihull were inadequate to cover the time and commitment needed, particularly those Members with special responsibilities (see earlier comments on this point).

Typing

Clear from responses, except in certain individual cases, that there was no need or demand for this type of service. The same could be said for other form of secretarial support. Some Members indicated that they did not realise that this type of support was available or questioned exactly what this entailed.

Learning

66% of responders thought that the learning process was satisfactory or better.

Some positive comments made about training activity held in the past and the desire for Member training to develop further.

Q5. Special Needs

No special needs identified.

Q6. Access to Information

Agenda Papers.

83% of responders felt that there was sufficient information from this source. Several comments made under this heading.

- o Too much jargon and acronyms used in reports.
- o Concerns over electronic access to agenda papers, a number of demands for paper copies, time and expense of accessing/printing of such papers.
- o A request made that Members be sent a hard copy of the agenda sheet (as opposed to full agenda). The Member is more readily able to identify topics in which he/she is interested.
- o Agendas still contain too much paper.

E-gender

53% of responders felt that there was sufficient information available for this source.

Too many Members do not access or make use of the system. Others don't bother or have access difficulties.

Membernet

66% of responders felt that there was sufficient information available from this source.

Comments made that Membernet either used little or not at all.

Council Website

66% of responders felt that sufficient information available from this source.

Some comments to the effect that used sparingly or not at all. Also, commented that until recently website regarded as being out of date and difficult to use. Some Members still have difficulty in finding the information that they need.

Press Releases

40% of responders felt that sufficient information was available from this source.

Insufficient knowledge of the availability of press releases or where to find them on the Council's website.

Officer briefings

86% of responders felt that sufficient information was available from this source.

Very positive comments as to obtaining information from Officers through briefing.

Information about Ward Issues

Various comments made on this issue.

- o get more information from residents than the Council.
- o not advised or copied in on issues affecting their Ward.

- o Alert system on Egenda good but time consuming. Needs to be automated.
- o Officers need to be more proactive over communicating on Ward issues.

Whilst the majority of Members felt that they were up to speed on Ward issues and were satisfied with the information received from the Council, there was clearly dissatisfaction amongst several members over the extent or timeliness of the information supplied by the Council on Ward matters. It was suggested by a few that any alerting such as that which appears on EGENDA should be more automated ie alert should be given by e-mail rather than the Member having to look for it on the Egenda system.

Note: on checking, e-mail notifications are generated by EGENDA. However, this relies on Members having notified Democratic Services regarding keywords for their Alerts Profile and also report authors making sure key words/wards are used when uploading reports to the system.

Other support services

There were a few general comments made with regard to support:-

- o Local Area Committees should be established and supported accordingly.
- o Proper secretarial support with modern IT equipment should be provided (one suggestion made over the use of "Blackberrys" for e-mail contact).

Overall Rating

93% of responders rated support as satisfactory or above.

Further comments

Listed are some of the general comments made by Members:-

- o Level of support shouldn't be based on political representation.
- o Allowances compare very poorly with other authorities, particularly where the Member has special responsibilities.
- o Obtaining information is sometimes made more difficult in not being able to get through the Contact Centre.
- o Timely information should be supplied when there is a change in senior management.
- o Too greater a reliance on e-mail communication.
- o A briefing on what is available would be a good start.

7. Officer Survey

- 7.1 A survey of Officers was undertaken to measure the number of Member Ward queries being dealt with by Senior Officers.
- 7.2 The results of this survey tie in with Member responses in that the most frequent and time consuming contact is made with Senior Officers, particularly in Community Services.

8. Focus Group Consideration

- 8.1 As indicated in the scoping document for this review, the results of the questionnaire sent to Members on the support given to them in undertaking their representational role, was to be shared with a Focus Group of Members.

8.2 This group comprised the Chairman, Deputy Chairman and Spokespersons to the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board.

8.3 As a result of the Focus Group's consideration of the results, the following comments were made:-

1. The return to the questionnaire was good, with 30 of the 51 Members responding (59%).
2. Of the responders, 66% were aware of the facilities available to them in carrying out their representational role. Whilst this is a fairly high percentage some Members commented that they were not aware of the services on offer.

Given this it would be desirable for the complete range of services to be re-published

3. A large proportion of Members do not hold surgeries. There appeared to be little demand for support to assist Members with such facilities.
4. Generally Members appeared happy with the way their queries were handled. There appeared to be little demand for additional support to Members in handling their casework. The Democratic Services Manager has suggested provision of a single point of contact for enquiries, which can be logged and progress chased if necessary. This process could be supported by an out of hours phone line with an answering machine.

Overview and Scrutiny Management Board views on this suggestion were sought.

5. There appeared to be little demand for clerical support
6. Members appeared to make limited use of the Egenda (Committee Administration System). A variety of reasons given:-
 - Don't bother with the system
 - Technical issues in getting into the system
 - Process to get in too laborious
 - Insufficient knowledge using the system

Similar comments made over the use of Membernet and, to a lesser degree, the Website.

Suggestion made that with regard to Egenda, refresher training was needed and the preference was for such training to be provided on a one to one basis.

7. Concern had been expressed on the provision of information on issues affecting the Members' Ward.

It was felt that extra promotion of the "keywords" facility on the Egenda system was needed which would ensure that Members would be alerted to ward based information going to a meeting as part of an agenda item. Further consideration was needed as to how general ward information could be captured and issued to Members.

9. Preliminary consideration by Overview and Scrutiny Management Board of Member Survey results

- 9.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Management Board at its meeting on 5 October 2006 gave consideration to the results of the Members' survey and other supporting documents such as observations of the focus group, details of support services provided by other local Metropolitan Authorities, details of the full list of support services provided by Solihull MBC and a role description / competencies expected of the general Councillor.
- 9.2 The Minute of the OSMB Meeting highlighting the main discussion topics follows:-

“Review of support to Councillors in undertaking their representational role

The Board considered the report of the Chief Executive, which contained the results of a survey of Members as to the support, provided by the Council to them in carrying out their representational role. In addition, information as to the full range of support services provided, support services provided by other similar Councils and a role description for the general councillor were also supplied.

The results from the survey had been shared in advance of the meeting with a focus group of Councillors and their comments and observations were also circulated.

Members commented that the suggestion made for a single point of contact would not be beneficial, the Members preferred to approach the relevant Senior Officer direct over their queries and be responsible for their own progress chasing.

Members concurred that the additional training mentioned was absolutely necessary.

Some Members expressed concern over the role description for Councillors as to its requirements. However, other Members saw this document as an "idealistic" statement that all Councillors should aspire to but will not necessarily achieve.

Reference was made to the technology used by Members and its "fitness for purpose". The Democratic Services Manager referred to the questionnaire recently sent to Members on IT provision, which was the precursor to a review as to what and how IT equipment should be provided. In the past a "one size fits all" approach was used but there was now recognition that Members had differing needs. A major overhaul of the IT Strategy was therefore planned.

RESOLVED:

- (i) The outcomes from the survey as documented from the Focus Group be supported except for the provision of a single point of contact for Members enquiries; and
- (ii) Members should be provided with the technology to enable them to access information in an efficient manner.”

- 9.3.1 OSMB at its meeting on 2nd November 2006 considered a final draft report and as a result, the Board agreed the inclusion of another recommendation which required that

“Any Member induction training to include an element directed to the Community Leadership role, in particular, the provision of relevant community information, contacts etc.”

10. Review Conclusions

- 10.1 Reverting to the Scoping Document for this review its rationale and purpose was to Review the developing needs and expectations of Members and see that these are met in an effective manner.
- 10.2 The conclusions reached from the survey of Members were that they are generally satisfied with the support that they receive in carrying out their representational role. There was limited demand for an enhanced level of support, ie additional clerical support/ handling casework.
- 10.3 The survey of Members did raise one or two issues, such as the need for further training on the Egenda system, which form part of the recommendations.
- 10.4 The research undertaken as part of the review identified a number of practices, such as the Member induction covering community matters which, in view of their beneficial nature, form part of the recommendations.
- 10.5 The recommendations that follow are put forward for consideration as meeting the Members' expectations in delivering their representational role.

11. Review Recommendations

- 11.1 Any Member induction training to include an element directed to the Community Leadership role, in particular, the provision of relevant community information, contacts etc.,
- 11.2 Early approval should be given to Member role descriptions to give clarity and as a benchmark for possible Member development,
- 11.3 Further consideration to be given to systems to enable Members to be supplied with Ward based information, over and above that which is available through the Committee System,
- 11.4 The complete range of support services be republished for Members,
- 11.5 No further additional administrative/clerical support be provided for Members,
- 11.6 With regard to the Egenda Committee Administration System further training be provided for Members preferably on a one to one basis, and
- 11.7 The "keywords" facility with Egenda should be further promoted, which would ensure that items of interest and relevant ward based information placed on the system is alerted to Members.

Scrutiny Review Scoping Template

Review Topic (Name of Review)	Members support		
Task & Finish Group Members (Councillors involved)			
Officer Support (Principal Witness and Scrutiny Officer)	Deborah Merry, Democratic Services Manager Roy Eaton, Senior Scrutiny Officer		
Rationale (Key issues and/or reason for doing the review)	To review the developing needs and expectations of members.		
Purpose/Objectives of the Review (What the review should achieve)	To ensure that the needs and expectations of members are met effectively.		
Indicators of Success (Desired outcomes - what should change as a result)	Changes to practices and procedures as necessary		
Methodology/Approach (What types of enquiry will be used to gather evidence)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather and review base documentation • Survey of Councillors • Survey of Key Officers • Interviews/Focus groups (picking up issues raised in surveys) • Comparative data from similar sized authorities 		
Witnesses/experts (who to see and when)	Deborah Merry		
Sources of Evidence (what is required and where will it come from)	See above		
Site Visits (Where and when)	None identified		
Evidence Sources for Views of Stakeholders (Consultation/workshops/focus groups/public meetings)	See above		
Resource Requirements (Person days, expenditure)	25 person days spread over 3 months		
Barriers/Dangers/Risks (Potential Pitfalls and weaknesses)	Lack of response to questionnaire		
Projected start date	23 rd May 2006	Draft Report due	7th September 2006
Meeting Frequency	N/A	Projected completion date	7 th September 2006

EXTRACT FROM MEMBERS INFORMATION BOOKLET**" 7. Members rights and privileges**Members Allowances Scheme

All elected Members are entitled to a basic allowance, which is paid monthly. Members with certain designated special responsibilities receive an additional allowance. The amounts of allowances are set out in the Council's Scheme of Allowances. Allowances are subject to income tax and national insurance.

Members may claim travelling and subsistence allowances in respect of approved duties as set out in the Allowances Scheme. Claims must be made monthly by certain dates. These dates can be found on Membernet and completed forms should be sent to the Members' Support Officer (Sue Ruffieux –Democratic Services.)

Allowances payable to Members are determined by the Council on consideration of recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel.

All Members are eligible to join the Local Government Pension Scheme. Application forms and further details will be supplied to all Members.

Dependents and Child Care Allowances are payable in certain circumstances and subject to conditions as set out on the Allowances Scheme.

8. Members' Facilities

All Members are issued with an ID Card which also enables access to the Car Park and parts of the Civic Suite which are protected by security doors.

Members will be given guidance as to where they may park when attending the Council House. The use of the Council Car parks is for the personal use of Members only when conducting official Council business.

The Member's suite is located at the front of the Civic Suite facing Homer Road. Access is via the Civic Suite or the Lower Car Park. An ID card will be needed for access from the car park.

Use of the Member's Suite is reserved exclusively for elected Members of the Council and guests are only permitted by invitation from a Member for the purpose of conducting official business.

9. ICT

All Members are for the duration of their Membership issued with a laptop computer and printer with office and email software. The Council will, where possible, provide a high speed link from a Member's home. Members will therefore be able to send email from their official Council email address and access both the Internet and the Council's Intranet. Email is the preferred form of written communication between the

Council and its Members, although paper copies of reports for meetings are made available to those Members attending each meeting.

Use of the ICT facility is subject to Members signing the Council's acceptable use policies and all ICT facilities are provided on the basis that they are to be used only on official business.

Council ICT equipment is subject to insurance in respect of breakdown, loss and damage. A help line is available and training will be provided.

10. Mobile phones and facsimile machines

These facilities are provided on request to enable those Members with special responsibilities (those receiving special responsibility allowances) to undertake official Council business.

11. Members' stationery

Members are provided with pre-printed stationery according to their own requirements. Such stationery is for the use of Members acting in their official capacity.

Members will be supplied with licence reply paid envelopes for sending communications to the Council. Stationery orders should be made to the Member Support Officer in Democratic Services.

12. Members' outgoing post

Members wishing to send outgoing post as part of their official duties may do so by handing it to the Civic Suite reception. Post to constituents for the purpose of replying to correspondence is part of this facility but unsolicited letters sent for the purposes of canvassing support or for political purposes would not normally form part of a Member's official duty.

13. Access to Council Premises

Members are welcome to visit Council premises upon arrangement through the relevant Director. The Council's Rules of Procedure (Standing Orders) require prior permission in all cases.

14. Licensed Members' Bar

The Licensed Members' Bar is situated in the Refreshment Room in the Civic Suite. The Bar will normally be open following meetings and is provided for the use of Members only and their guests. As with all other areas of the Civic Suite and Council premises, the Members' Bar is designated a non-smoking area.

15. Use of Council Premises for surgeries

Members may use without cost appropriate Council premises for surgeries by arrangement with the management of the building and subject to availability. In the case of surgeries held in schools, contact should be made with the head teacher. If a Member has no convenient access to suitable Council premises, the Council will re-imburse costs on a pre-arranged basis with the Democratic Services Section.

16. Code of Conduct

The Council has adopted a Code of Conduct which applies to all elected Members and co-opted Members. The Monitoring Officer will give guidance to Members on the application of the Code of Conduct.

17. Distribution of papers for Council meetings and decision sessions

Communications are either sent by post or courier. All Council Members receive a hard copy of the papers for all meetings and bodies of which they are a Member. All public papers published for meetings and decision sessions are posted on the web site.

Papers for Council meetings and decision sessions are normally despatched so as to arrive 5 clear days before the date of the meeting.

Difficulties are sometimes experienced in delivery arrangements. If you do have problems with delivery and receive papers late please do let us know.

18. Inspection of documents and access to information.

Access to information and documents held by the Council is necessary to enable a Member to undertake his or her role and Members will find that officers will try to ensure that the response to requests for documents and information are dealt with in a positive and helpful manner.

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 enables the public to have access to a wide variety of information held by the Council. The Council's publication scheme, which is published on the web site contains details of information which is available to the public and explains that some information is exempt and by law cannot be released. For example personal information and information about commercial interests will not be available to the public.

Elected Members have additional statutory rights to see certain documents which are under the control of the Council, which relate to any business to be transacted at Cabinet meeting, Cabinet Member decision sessions, a Council Committee or Sub-Committee (including Scrutiny Boards) even though a Member is not a Member of that Board, committee or sub-committee.

Members also have rights under common law to see documents where they can properly claim that they have a "need to know" for the purpose of undertaking their duty as a Councillor. This would not apply where the Member had a personal or prejudicial interest in the matter.

Members of a Scrutiny Board have the right (subject to some exceptions) to receive copies of documents required for the purpose of the scrutiny function.

The fact that confidential information is released to a Member does not give that Member the right to release such information to third parties. Members are reminded that paragraph 3 the Council's Code of Conduct prohibits the disclosure of confidential information.

Members' rights to see documents and have official information not available to the public are not unrestricted and in particular it should be noted that information cannot be released to a Member where to do so would not be in the interest of the Council as a whole.

If a Member considers that access to a document or information has been refused unreasonably or improperly, they should in the first instance contact the responsible Director or the Chief Executive.

19. Access to meetings

Members have the same rights as Members of the public to attend meetings and Cabinet Decision Sessions although where a Member has a personal or prejudicial interest in the business being conducted he or she cannot remain in the meeting room.

When a meeting or session resolves to exclude the public, Members who are not a Member of the body concerned are required to leave. Members would only be entitled to attend private Cabinet meetings, Cabinet Decision Sessions, Committees, Scrutiny Boards, Task and Finish Groups and Sub-Committees where they are not a Member of the body concerned if they can establish a common law "need to know". It is suggested that if any Member feels that he or she is entitled to remain in a meeting in the private portion he or she should seek early advice from the Solicitor to the Council. "

SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEMBERS' SUPPORT SERVICES

Support Service	Detail	Provided by
Access to Printing	To be used for Council business, not political party business	Democratic Services, Civic Suite Staff
Car parking	The use of Council Car parks (for personal use of Members only) when conducting official Council business	
Civic Catering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A meal is provided for most evening meetings • A Licensed Members' Bar is available in the Civic Suite 	Civic Catering Manager/ Democratic Services
Civic Suite – Members' facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members Group Rooms • IT equipment • Resource area 	Civic Officer/ Democratic Services
Clerical/Secretarial Support	Typing support available on request	Democratic Services
Council Diary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard copy of Diary & Yearbook for all Members • Electronic version - All meeting dates are available for viewing through Membernet 	Democratic Services
Dealing with Member enquiries	Enquiries from Members dealt with on a daily basis	Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service, Democratic Services team
E-Genda System	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic system for handling information, such as recording and disseminating Cabinet, Scrutiny and Committee reports and decisions • Councillors are able to access agendas, reports and minutes via this electronic retrieval system • Email alerts from E-Genda System • Current and past meeting papers are available <p>Future Council meeting details</p>	Democratic Services

Support Service	Detail	Provided by
Induction	Every newly elected Member receives a pack of information from Democratic Services. Information on facilities, legalities and procedures are outlined at an introductory session led by the Chief Executive	Democratic Services
Insurances	Members have the benefit of certain insurances held by the Council	Resources Directorate
IT Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT Officer support available for technical support relating to equipment supplied by the Council. • User training available through training & development programme. 	IT Support Team
Meetings Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Papers for meetings are restricted to circulation as a matter of course to meeting Members only. Other Members have access to meeting papers through E-Genda • Decision summaries are published on E-Genda and the internet 	Democratic Services
Membernet/Solnet	Council's web-site and Membernet, the Intranet site specifically for Councillors	Democratic Services
Members Allowances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Allowance - includes elements to cover telephones, postage • Special Responsibility Allowances • Travel, subsistence, childcare and dependent carers' allowance • Membership of Local Government Pension Scheme <p>The allowances scheme and the value of the allowances are kept under review by the Independent Remuneration Panel</p>	Democratic Services
Members' IT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lap top computer, printer • Broadband connection • Mobile phones/fax machines (on request) for SRA holders • Email addresses for all Councillors 	Democratic Services and IT Support Team

Support Service	Detail	Provided by
Members' web-pages	Each Member has their own web page, linked into the Council's website containing Members biographical and ward details, information about their activities. These websites are maintained by the Council based on instructions from individual Members	Democratic Services
Monitoring Officer Advice to Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc advice as and when sought by individual members • Training sessions for members • Support and advice to the Standards Committee • Maintains Register of Members' Interests 	Monitoring Officer
Post Room Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribution of mail (by hand delivery) to all Members • Members wishing to send outgoing post as part of their official duties may do so by handing it to the Civic Suite reception 	Corporate Post Room
Press releases/Media work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of press releases available to all Members • Working with media training provided for Cabinet Members 	Head of Communications
Provision of information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email alerts from E-Genda System • Press releases • Website/Membernet • Policy briefings - training sessions on specific subjects • Officer Contact numbers provided in Group rooms • The Forward Plan looks ahead four months and indicates key decisions that are to be taken by the Cabinet or Cabinet Members • All Members of the Council are supplied with a full copy of the weekly list of planning applications • Briefings are available on request for designated spokespersons 	Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service, Democratic Services team, Communications Team
Registrations under Data Protection Act	Members are registered as Data Users under the Act	Corporate Information Governance Manager

Support Service	Detail	Provided by
Stationery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Printed letter heads, business cards, envelopes, printer paper, cartridges • Secure disposal of confidential (Council related) waste paper • licence reply paid envelopes for sending communications to the Council 	Democratic Services
Surgery support	Free use of Council premises for surgeries; if no suitable premises available the cost of hiring alternatives will be reimbursed	Democratic Services
Training & Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Councillors have access to a training and development programme that varies from year to year. • Member Development Steering Group currently reviewing this. • Attendance at appropriate Conferences & Seminars may be booked on request. • Councillors' training and development budget for 2006-07 is £20,000 	Democratic Services

MEMBERS ALLOWANCE
COMPARISON WITH WEST MIDLANDS COUNCILS

COUNCIL	BASIC	LEADER	DEP LEADER	CABINET	CHAIR O&S	CHAIR PLAN	V CHAIR PLAN	CHAIR LIC	GROUP LEADER(L)	GROUP LEADER(S)	GENERAL PURP	SPOKES	NOTES	POP	CLLRS
SOLIHULL	6771.64	13543.28	8125.97	6771.64	5417.31	5417.31	2708.65	2708.65	6771.64	3385.83	2708.65	1354.33		200400	51
COVENTRY	12104	21786	15732	9684	9684 (scrutiny co-ord, 6050 for others)	6050	2419	6050	3630				Note: Payment for Dep Scrutiny Chairs and Licensing and Member responsible for Standards	300848	54
BIRMINGHAM	15148	52080	39060	29165	20415 (Scrutiny co-ord, 13124 for others inc T&F Groups)	15312		13124	13124	5468 (min of 12 cllrs)			Note: Also have payment for Dep Leader of Groups	984608	120
WALSALL	9744.12	14616.18	7308.09	4872.06	4872.06	4872.06	2436.03	4872.06		7308.09 (min of 6 seats)	4872.06	2436.03	Note: Also have payment for Dep Leader of Groups and Vice Chairs of Committees	259500	60
WOLVERHAMPTON	8209	24628	20523	16418	16418 (Chair of Panel 12314)	16418	5418	12314	16418	4104		4104	Note: Figures relate to 2005/06. Have various other SRAs.	239100	60
DUDLEY	7386.64	19077.66	9008.54	5299.37	3179.67	5299.37	1854.83	3179.67	3179.67		3179.67		Note: Allowances paid for all Vice Chairmen, Area Committees and members of Licensing Sub committee	309000	72
SANDWELL														282900	72

**SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL- ROLE DESCRIPTION**

PURPOSE

- To participate in the governance of the Borough of Solihull.
- To represent Ward interests and to deal with constituents' enquiries and issues of local concern.
- To engage with the community and campaign for improvement of quality of life in all sectors of the community.
- To represent the Council on outside bodies if appointed.

MAIN ACTIVITIES:

- 1) To fulfil statutory and any locally determined requirements of an elected Member, including compliance with the relevant codes of conduct and protocols, and participation in those decisions and activities reserved for the full Council, eg setting budgets and strategic policy framework arising from reports from the Cabinet
- 2) To engage proactively with the local community, keep up-to-date with issues of local concern, and represent the interests and concerns of all residents in the Ward
- 3) To participate proactively as a Member of any Overview and Scrutiny Board, Committee or other body to which appointed, acting as a critical friend and giving constructive feedback
- 4) To participate in the activities of any outside body to which appointed, providing two-way communication between the organisations and reporting to Council on the work of the body
- 5) To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's policies and practices and also the factors which impact on the community's well being and identity
- 6) To develop and maintain a working knowledge of the Council's services, management arrangements, powers/duties, and constraints
- 7) To develop good working relationships with colleagues, Council officers and the wider community
- 8) To contribute constructively to open government and democratic renewal through active encouragement to the community to participate in the government of the Borough
- 9) To participate in appropriate member development activities organised by the authority

**SOLIHULL METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL
MEMBER OF THE COUNCIL - KEY COMPETENCIES**

Understanding the Council	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the Vision and Values for the Borough, within the political framework • Understand the main services provided by the Council and how the Council operates
Strategic and Flexible Thinking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think strategically, have an understanding of the wider implications, consequences and connections for issues • Think creatively, challenge and contribute to the development of innovative and effective solutions
Community Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the customers' perspective as the focal point of decision making and service strategy • Encourage participation and represent the views and interests of the ward and individual citizens within it
Collaborative Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work in co-operation with other bodies, where appointed as representative of the Council • Work in collaboration with Cabinet members, Overview and Scrutiny Chairs and senior officers
Performance Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to the performance management of the Council to achieve Council objectives and values through continuous improvement
Clear Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the council and act as an ambassador • Communicate clearly and positively, including public speaking • Listen to the views and perceptions of others • Use ICT to communicate with others
Integrity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High degree of probity and integrity. • Ability to command respect and credibility • Ensure all actions are carried out to the highest ethical standards
Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An understanding of the Council's equality and diversity responsibilities and their implications for a ward councillor
Political Awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appreciation and understanding of the political environment at local, regional and national level

**SUPPORT TO MEMBERS : REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE
SURVEY OF OTHER LOCAL METROPOLITAN COUNCILS**

Council Name	IT	Phone/fax	Stationery	Post	Accommodation	Photocopying	Media	Clerical	Research, Resources	Training
Solihull	Laptop, printer, office/e-mail software (for business use only)	Mobile phone and fax to those in receipt of a special responsibility allowance	To meet the Members' needs. Letterhead, pre-paid reply envelopes	Outgoing post (handled by Civic Suite staff)	Free use of available Council premises for holding surgeries. Reimbursement of cost should other venues be used					
Dudley	Laptop or PC at Members' home		Basic stationery. Letterhead, envelopes, Member Enquiry forms. Business cards and surgery notices printed for Members	Outgoing mail	Group rooms available for the three political groups. Committee rooms can be booked at the Council House	Photocopying and shredding facilities available	Media support available			
Coventry (Separate Members' Support Unit provided) (54 members)	Laptops, printers and software	Mobile phones supplied to postholders	Members provided with an individual budget for printing and stationery (£150)	Assistance in handling enquiries and complaints. Incoming post for postholders processed by staff. Outgoing mail	Use of Committee Rooms	Photocopying and shredding facilities	Radio Interview room available and Advice and support	Confidential filing (2 years), Dictation, word processing, Diary keeping for postholders, messaging service	Library	Induction, buddy arrangement with staff member and development diary

APPENDIX F

Council Name	IT	Phone/fax	Stationery	Post	Accommodation	Photocopying	Media	Clerical	Research, Resources	Training
Walsall	Computer equipment		Basic stationery supplied		A room is provided for each political group. No support provided for the holding of surgeries			A secretary is assigned to each group. Will assist with constituency work when required. (Also see research resources)	Member Support Officer provides general support and with research. Occasional support through committee staff	
Sandwell	Computer equipment, dedicated IT support officer provided in Member Services Unit				Can hold surgeries in Council premises. If none suitable, staff assist in finding an alternative venue, funded by Council		Provided each Cllr. With their own web space which the member updates. Some members receive officer support to do this	Secretarial team providing support to all Members and PA support to Cabinet Members	3 strong member support unit meeting all basic needs but also casework. This element probably equates to 1 full time member of staff	Training & Development Programme, includes topics to help the Member in their community roles, such as organisation of surgeries, risk assessments
Wolverhampton								Have a member support office through which basic clerical support is provided		



Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

Review Of Support To Councillors In Undertaking Their Representational Role

Councillor survey

This survey forms part of a review of the support that Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council provides to councillors in carrying out their representational role. The role of members has changed significantly in recent years and it is important that councils provide the support needed to undertake these new roles and responsibilities. The **Overview & Scrutiny Management Board** has commissioned this review

Your views on the support currently provided by the Council are important. Please complete the survey from the perspective of your role as a councillor, in particular, your role as a ward councillor working in the community.

As part of the review a focus group of councillors may be held to pick up any specific issues highlighted by the returned questionnaires.

The survey should take you no longer than 10-15 minutes to complete.

Once completed please send the survey to Roy Eaton, Senior Scrutiny Officer. **All completed forms must reach Roy Eaton by Friday, 4th August 2006.** If you prefer to complete the survey questionnaire electronically, please contact Roy Eaton (contact details below) who will then e-mail a copy to you.

The information you provide will only be used for the purposes of informing this review and any comments you make will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If you have any questions related to this survey please contact Roy Eaton at reaton@solihull.gov.uk telephone, 0121 704 6079.

R. Eaton
Senior Scrutiny Officer
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
PO Box 18
Council House
Solihull
West Midlands
B91 9QS

NAME:

POLITICAL GROUP:

WARD REPRESENTED:

If you prefer you can complete and return the questionnaire anonymously. Identification will however enable us to try to assist where difficulties have been identified and also to follow up councillors who have not returned a form.

1. CURRENT POSITION

Are you aware of the facilities and services that are currently available to Members in enabling you to undertake your representational role? Please circle the appropriate answer.

Yes / No

2. RATING OF CURRENT FACILITIES

How would you rate the existing facilities?

(Use 1 = poor, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = good and 4 = excellent. Enter 0 if the facility is not used)

Facility	Rating	Additional comments (optional)
Facilities provided in the Civic Suite		
Mobile phones and facsimile machines (Members with special responsibilities only)		
Members stationery		
Members outgoing post service		
Provision of premises used as surgeries		

CONFIDENTIAL**3. GENERAL CONTACT**

How often do you seek assistance from different parts of the Council in helping you to perform your representational role? Please tick the appropriate box in the table below to indicate level of frequency.

	Daily	Weekly	Fortnightly	Monthly	Less than monthly
Chief Executive					
Corporate Director					
Service Heads or their staff					
Democratic Services					
Civic Services					
Members Support Officer					
Others					

If other officers have given you support then please give details below

CONFIDENTIAL**4. PERSONAL SUPPORT TO MEMBERS**

This section is seeking information on the support you receive individually as a councillor, including casework.

Please rate the following types of support.

(1 = poor, 2 = satisfactory, 3 = good and 4 = excellent.

Enter 0 if the support is not available)(If support is available but not used please comment as to whether this is likely to change)

Support	Rating	Additional comments (optional)
Support for Surgeries		
Support for Casework		
Members allowances		
Secretarial support - typing		
Secretarial support - other		
Learning & development		

5. SPECIAL NEEDS

Please answer yes / no

(a) Do you have any special needs?	
(b) If so, are they catered for appropriately?	
If you have answered no to 5b please state why	

CONFIDENTIAL**6. ACCESS TO INFORMATION**

Do you feel that you receive sufficient information from the following sources to effectively carry out your representational role? Tick as appropriate

Information source	Yes	No	Additional comments (optional)
Agenda papers			
Egenda system			
Membernet			
The Council's website			
Press releases			
Access to officers for briefing			
Others			

7. SPECIFIC WARD ISSUES

How well informed do you feel about issues happening in your Ward? Please comment below

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q1/2

POSITION Y/N	CIVIC SUITE	COMMENTS	PHONES /FAX	COMMENTS	STATIONERY	COMMENTS	POST	COMMENTS	SURGERIES	COMMENTS
N	1		0		1		1		1	
NOT FULLY	3		0		3		3		0	
	4	BARELY LEAVE FIRST FLOOR	2	GIVEN FAX BACK. WOULD REQUIRE MOBILE PHONE WHEN RETIRES FROM WORK	3		2		2	
Y	4	TOO GOOD. NOT USED ENOUGH	0		3		3	VERY RARELY USED	0	
Y	4		0		4		3		4	
N	2		2		2		1		0	
Y	4		4		4		0		4	
	3		4		3		3		0	USES PARISH COUNCIL FACILITIES
Y	4		1	NEW MOBILE REQD. FAX/ANSWERMC H OUT OF DATE	3		2	CONFUSION WITH ANOTHER CLLR	3	
Y	4		0		3		1		0	
	2		0		2		2		0	
Y	4		0		3		3		0	
	4	PINBOARD FOR MESSAGES OR CHARITY NOTICES MAY BE USEFUL	0		4		0	USE INTERNAL POST ONLY	0	THERE IS NO LIBRARY OR BUILDING OTHER THAN A SCHOOL THAT COULD BE USED
Y	3		2		4		4		2	
	2	NICE BUT NO WAY OF WORKING WITH LAPTOP IN MEETINGS	0		2	AGAIN, NICE....	1	NEED TO COME INTO SOLIHULL TO SEND LETTERS TO CONSTITUENTS/RESIDENTS ETC.	0	

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q1/2

POSITION Y/N	CIVIC SUITE	COMMENTS	PHONES /FAX	COMMENTS	STATIONERY	COMMENTS	POST	COMMENTS	SURGERIES	COMMENTS
Y	4		4		4		0	DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT	0	DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT IT
Y	3		3		3		3		2	
Y - FULL EXTENT MAY BE UNCLEAR	3		0		2	TOOK A LONG TIME TO OBTAIN. THE OUTSOURCED SERVICE DOESN'T APPEAR TO BE EFFECTIVE. E-MAIL ADDRESS IS INCORRECT	0	NOT AWARE THAT THIS WAS AVAILABLE OR WHAT IT COVERS	0	
Y	3		3	HAS FAX. NOT AWARE OF MOBILE PHONES	4		3	UNNECESSARY USE OF LARGE ENVELOPES, CAN BE FOLDED IN SMALLER ENVELOPE. HOLD BACK ITEMS TO SEND WITH OTHERS	0	
N	3	LIKE GROUP ROOM AND FACILITIES. STAFF EXCELLENT	0	NOT ASKED FOR ONE	4	CA N'T FAULT IT	0	ONLY USED INTERNAL POST SERVICE	3	USE HOLS MOAT LIBRARY. WOULD BE BETTER WITH PRIVATE SPACE. STAFF V ERY HELPFUL
Y	4		?	WHAT PHONES	3		2		2	KNOWLE LIBRARY USED. LACK OF PRIVACY
Y	2	COMPUTER ACCESS IN CIVIC SUITE WOULD BE HELPFUL	0	DON'T USE BUT WOULD LIKE TO	3		2		1	USE KINGSHURST LIBRARY AND FORDBRIDGE TOWN COUNCIL. BOTH VERY HELPFUL BUT NOT IDEAL
Y	0				3		3		0	

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q1/2

POSITION Y/N	CIVIC SUITE	COMMENTS	PHONES /FAX	COMMENTS	STATIONERY	COMMENTS	POST	COMMENTS	SURGERIES	COMMENTS
Y	2				2		1	SHOULD PROVIDE PRE-PAID ENVELOPES FOR SENDING MAIL TO COUNCIL	1	
Y	3		0		3		3		0	
Y	2		3		3		2		N/A	
	4		0		3		3		3	
Y	2		0		2		2	SOMETIMES POOR	0	
Y	4	MEMBERS FLOOR UNDER USED	4	FAX USED RARELY	4		3		0	
Y	3		1	DIDN'T KNOW THAT THESE WERE AVAILABLE	3		3		1	DIFFICULT TO ARRANGE

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q3

CEXEC	CORP DIR	SERV HEADS	DEM SERVS	CIVICS	MEM S O	OTHERS
<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	<MONTHLY MONTHLY	<MONTHLY WEEKLY	<MONTHLY MONTHLY	<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY - NEIGHBOURHOOD
<MONTHLY	DAILY	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	
<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY MONTHLY	WEEKLY WEEKLY	WEEKLY MONTHLY	MONTHLY FORTNIGHTLY	MONTHLY <MONTHLY	
<MONTHLY <MONTHLY <MONTHLY	WEEKLY FORTNIGHTLY MONTHLY	WEEKLY FORTNIGHTLY WEEKLY	FORTNIGHTLY WEEKLY WEEKLY	MONTHLY DAILY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY MONTHLY	
MONTHLY <MONTHLY MONTHLY <MONTHLY MONTHLY <MONTHLY	WEEKLY MONTHLY WEEKLY <MONTHLY WEEKLY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY WEEKLY DAILY <MONTHLY WEEKLY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY WEEKLY FORTNIGHTLY <MONTHLY WEEKLY <MONTHLY	FORTNIGHTLY WEEKLY WEEKLY <MONTHLY MONTHLY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY WEEKLY MONTHLY <MONTHLY MONTHLY <MONTHLY	PLANNING OFFICERS HELPFUL WEEKLY WEEKLY <MONTHLY
<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	MONTHLY	MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY. SOME DIRECTORATES TAKE AGES TO RESPOND TO E-MAILS AND HAVE TO BE PROMPTED NOW SEND LETTERS TO THIS DEPT. RATHER THAN E-MAILS
<MONTHLY MONTHLY	MONTHLY FORTNIGHTLY	FORTNIGHTLY DAILY	FORTNIGHTLY <MONTHLY	WEEKLY <MONTHLY	FORTNIGHTLY <MONTHLY	WEEKLY - MAINLY SCH
NEVER	NEVER	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	NEVER	DOESN'T KNOW WHO THIS IS	LONG WAIT TO GET THROUGH TO CONTACT CENTRE. PENSIONS & PAYROLL UNHELPFUL. AS NEW COUNCILLOR DON'T UNDERSTAND STRUCTURES. CONTACTS GIVEN TO ME BY EXISTING COUNCILLORS HAVE PROVED TO BE INCORRECT. HAS BEEN ADVISED TO GO TO DIRECTOR LEVEL.

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q3

CEXEC	CORP DIR	SERV HEADS	DEM SERVS	CIVICS	MEM S O	OTHERS
<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	FORTNIGHTLY WEEKLY	WEEKLY	FORTNIGHTLY FORTNIGHTLY	WEEKLY	DOESN'T KNOW WHO THIS IS	ALMOST DAILY - NEIGHBOURHOOD OFFICER. PAs TO Cos MOST HELPFUL
MONTHLY		WEEKLY	WEEKLY	FORTNIGHTLY	NOT SURE WHO THIS IS	
<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY - LISTOF OFFICER CONTACTS WOULD BE USEFUL
<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	DAILY	FORTNIGHTLY	WEEKLY		
<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	MONTHLY FORTNIGHTLY	FORTNIGHTLY FORTNIGHTLY	<MONTHLY FORTNIGHTLY	<MONTHLY WEEKLY	<MONTHLY <MONTHLY	<MONTHLY DAILY - REGULAR CONTACT WITH HOUSING WITH GOOD RESPONSE
<MONTHLY	WEEKLY	FORTNIGHTLY MONTHLY	FORTNIGHTLY WEEKLY	WEEKLY	MONTHLY	WEEKLY
<MONTHLY	FORTNIGHTLY	WEEKLY	FORTNIGHTLY	<MONTHLY	<MONTHLY	
DAILY	DAILY	DAILY	DAILY	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	
<MONTHLY	WEEKLY	WEEKLY	FORTNIGHTLY	FORTNIGHTLY	MONTHLY	<MONTHLY

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q4

SUPPORT SURGERIES	COMMENTS	CASEWORK	COMMENTS	MEMBER ALLOWANCES	COMMENTS	TYPING	COMMENTS	SEC OTHER	COMMENTS	LEARNING	COMMENTS
		1		1		1		1		1	
0	DID NOT REALISE WAS AVAILABLE	0	DID NOT REALISE WAS AVAILABLE	?		0	NOT USED	0	NOT USED	2	
0		2		1	WELL BELOW OTHER COUNCILS	1	DIDN'T REALISE WAS AVAILBLE	1	DIDN'T REALISE WAS AVAILBLE	2	
0		4		0		0		0			DEPENDS ON COURSES ON OFFER
0		3		0		0		0			
0	NOT AWARE, IS IT AVAILABLE	0	NOT AWARE, IS IT AVAILABLE	1	VERY POOR FOR RESPONSIBILT Y & TIME COMMITMENT	1	VERY GOOD SUPPORT FOR CABINET RESPONSIBILIT Y	1	VERY GOOD SUPPORT FOR CABINET RESPONSIBILITY	2	
0	NOT REQ'D	3		4		0	NOT REQ'D	4	RARELY USED	3	
0	PROVISION COULD BE MADE UNDER REGENERATIO N PROPOSALS	3		3		0	NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE	0	NOT LIKELY TO CHANGE	3	
2	DOESN'T UNDERSTAND. LIBRARY STAFF UNLOCK ROOM	2	WHAT DOES THIS MEAN. GETS RESPONSES WHEN ISSUES RAISED	1	VERY LOW COMPARED TO OTHER AUTHORITIES	N/A		N/A		2	LOOKING FORWARD TO MEMBER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME 2006/07
0		3		0		0		0		3	
0		3	CONNECT SERVICE SLOW. RELY ON DIRECT CONTACT WITH OFFICERS	0		0		2		2	
0		4		2		0		0		0	

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q4

SUPPORT SURGERIES	COMMENTS	CASEWORK	COMMENTS	MEMBER ALLOWANCES	COMMENTS	TYPING	COMMENTS	SEC OTHER	COMMENTS	LEARNING	COMMENTS
0	NO SUITABLE VENUE	4	GENERALLY FIND OFFICERS WILLING TO HELP	4	NO PROBLEMS, ALTHOUGH MY CLAIM SIMPLE	0	NOT NEEDED	0	WHAT IS THIS?	4	ATTEND SEMINARS AND WORKSHOPS IF AVAILABLE
0	SERVICE NOT USED	0	SERVICE NOT USED	1		0	SERVICE NOT USED	0	SERVICE NOT USED	3	
1	NO SUPPORT FOR SURGERIES EVER MENTIONED	1	NO SUPPORT OFFERED. SOUGHT HELP FROM OTHERS	1	ALLOWANCES DON'T COMPENSATE FOR THE WORK DONE	0	DO MY OWN	0	DO MY OWN	1	LACKS COHESION. NO DIFFERENTIATION
0		0		4		0		0		4	
1		2		2		0		0		3	
0	STARTING SURGERIES IN THE AUTUMN	3	OCCASIONAL USE	0	NOT SOUGHT ANY SUPPORT	0	NOT AWARE AVAILABLE	0	NOT AWARE AVAILABLE	2	APART FROM INDUCTION HAVE MISSED SESSIONS. INDUCTION HELPFUL BUT TOO MUCH INFO TOO SOON
0		3	CONTACT RELEVANT DIRECTOR/SENIOR MEMBER BY E-MAIL OR PHONE. USUALLY GET GOOD ATTENTION	0		0		0		0	
3			3 OFFICER SUPPORT ESSENTIAL. OCCASIONALLY DON'T RESPOND TO EMAILS		3 VERY EFFICIENT		0 DON'T USE		0 DON'T USE		3 OPPORTUNITIES TO ATTEND CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND TRAINING DAYS
2		2		4		0		0		0	

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q4

SUPPORT SURGERIES	COMMENTS	CASEWORK	COMMENTS	MEMBER ALLOWANCES	COMMENTS	TYPING	COMMENTS	SEC OTHER	COMMENTS	LEARNING	COMMENTS
1		0	INTERESTED IN THIS	2		0		0		2	KEEN THAT THIS DEVELOPES MUCH FURTHER
0	NOT USED	0	NOT USED			0	NOT USED	0	NOT USED		AS AND WHEN REQUIRED
0		3		2		1	UNAWARE OF THIS SERVICE	1	UNAWARE OF THIS SERVICE	1	
0	NOT USED	3		3	TOO LOW BUT THEY ARRIVE ON TIME	4	CIVIC SUITE ONLY	0	NOT USED	3	SEMINARS GOOD. NEED MORE COMPUTER TRAINING
0		0		3		0		4	EDUCATION STAFF	2	
0	NOT USED AT PRESENT BUT WILL IN FUTURE	0	NOT USED AT PRESENT BUT WILL IN FUTURE	0	NOT USED AT PRESENT BUT WILL IN FUTURE	0	NOT USED AT PRESENT BUT WILL IN FUTURE	0	NOT USED AT PRESENT BUT WILL IN FUTURE	0	NOT USED AT PRESENT BUT WILL IN FUTURE
0	NOT REQUIRED	3		2		0	NOT USED	0	NOT USED	2	
0		4		4		4		4		4	
1		3		2		1	NEVER USE	1	NEVER USE	1	MORE NEEDED WITH CREDIT GIVEN

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q5/6

SPECIAL NEEDS Y/N	CATERED FOR	AGENDA	COMMENTS	EGENDA	COMMENTS	MEMBER NET	COMMENTS	WEBSITE	COMMENTS	PRESS REL	COMMENTS	OFFICER BRIEFINGS	COMMENTS	OTHERS	COMMENTS
N		N		N	DOESN'T USE	N		N		N		N		N	
N		Y	REPORTS USE TOO MUCH JARGON & ACRONYMS	Y		Y		Y		Y		Y			
N		Y						Y		Y		Y			
N		Y		Y		Y		Y		N	DO NOT ACCESS	Y			
N		Y		N	DO NOT USE	N	DO NOT USE	N	DO NOT USE	N		Y			
N		N	ELECTRONIC MEANS OF OBTAINING PAPERS IS TIME CONSUMING AND EXPENSIVE	N		N		Y		N		Y			
N		Y		N	DO NOT USE	Y		N	QUALITY LEAVES SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED	N		Y			
N		Y		Y		Y		Y		Y		Y			
N		Y	CABINET AGENDAS AVAILABLE TO ALL MEMBERS	N	USES OWN PC NOT LAPTOP. TEDIUS SYSTEM CAN'T ACCESS VIA LINKS	Y		Y		Y		Y			

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q5/6

SPECIAL NEEDS Y/N	CATERED FOR	AGENDA	COMMENTS	EGENDA	COMMENTS	MEMBER NET	COMMENTS	WEBSITE	COMMENTS	PRESS REL	COMMENTS	OFFICER BRIEFINGS	COMMENTS	OTHERS	COMMENTS
N		Y		Y		Y		Y		N		Y			LAPTOP POOR QUALITY. SECURITY SYSTEMS OVER SENSITIVE
N		Y		Y		Y				N		Y			
N		Y								Y		Y			
N		N	A PAPER COPY OF EACH AGENDA WOULD BE HELPFUL (NOT FULL PAPERS)	N	NOTICE OF LAST COUNCIL AGENDA ARRIVED DAY AFTER MEETING	Y	WHERE HAVE THE WARD MAPS GONE	Y		Y	NOW THAT I KNOW WHERE TO FIND THEM	Y			EGENDA WOULD BE MORE HELPFUL IF IT GAVE THE NAME OF THE MEETING. YOU HAVE TO STUDY THE ? V. CAREFULLY TO KNOW WHICH AGENDAS ARE AVAILABLE. HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT ADDITIONAL MEETINGS
N		Y		Y		N		N		N		Y			
Y	PROVISION OF SANDWICHES PRIOR TO A MEETING NOT SUFFICIENT FOR A WORKING COUNCIL OR	Y	IS GOOD	Y	IS GOOD	Y	IS GOOD	Y	ONLY JUST. NEW SITE HARD TO NAVIGATE	N	NEED TO HIGHLIGHT THOSE GIVING UPDATES	N	DO NOT HAVE ACCESS TO OFFICERS FOR BRIEFINGS	N	
N		Y		Y		Y		Y		Y		Y			

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q5/6

SPECIAL NEEDS Y/N	CATERED FOR	AGENDA	COMMENTS	EGENDA	COMMENTS	MEMBER NET	COMMENTS	WEBSITE	COMMENTS	PRESS REL	COMMENTS	OFFICER BRIEFINGS	COMMENTS	OTHERS	COMMENTS
N		Y	ALTHOUGH SOMETIMES RAISE MORE QUESTIONS THAN ANSWERS	Y		Y		Y		N	ONLY CABINET MEMBERS GET THESE	Y			
N		Y	TOO MUCH INFO TOO LATE. SOME REPETITIVE	Y	NOT USING FULLY	Y	NOT USING FULLY	Y	DIFFICULTY IN NAVIGATING FINDING INFO	N	DON'T GET MANY	Y			INFO NOT ALWAYS PRESENTED IN UNBIASED WAY
N		Y	TOO MUCH PAPER. MOST OF RECENT COUNCIL AGENDA UN-NECESSARY	Y		Y		Y				Y			
N		Y		Y	TOOK WHILE TO UNDER- STAND SYSTEM	Y	DON'T USE MUCH	Y	UNTIL RECENTLY OUT OF DATE AND DIFFICULT TO USE	Y		Y			IMPORTANT SOURCE OF INF
N		Y		BLANK		N	DON'T USE	N	DON'T USE	N		Y			
N		Y		Y		N	NEED FURTHER TRAINING ON THIS	N	NEED FURTHER TRAINING ON THIS	N	DO NOT RECEIVE INFO ON THESE	N			NEEDS TO BE CONSISTENCY
N		Y			NEED TRAINING		NEED TRAINING		NEED TRAINING	Y		Y			
N		Y		Y		Y		N	SOMETIMES DIFFICULT TO FIND INFO	N		Y			

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q5/6

SPECIAL NEEDS Y/N	CATERED FOR	AGENDA	COMMENTS	EGENDA	COMMENTS	MEMBER NET	COMMENTS	WEBSITE	COMMENTS	PRESS REL	COMMENTS	OFFICER BRIEFINGS	COMMENTS	OTHERS	COMMENTS
Y	MORE COMPUTER TRAINING	Y	TOO MUCH. REPORTS TOO LONG		PREFER HARD COPY. WASTING PAPER HAVING TO PRINT THINGS OUT	Y	OCCASION-AL USE ONLY	Y	OCCASION-AL USE ONLY	N		Y			
N		Y		N	CAN'T ACCESS	Y		Y		Y		Y			
N		N		Y		Y		Y		N		N			
N		Y	SOMETIMES NECESSARY TO SEEK ADDITIONAL INFO	N	SOMETIMES BEARS NO RELATION TO MY REQUIREMENTS. DIFFICULT TO FOLLOW DECISION REPORTS	N		Y		N	UNDERSELL COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS	Y			
N		Y	RECEIPT OF HARD COPIES	Y	WHEN HAS THE TIME	Y	WHEN HAS THE TIME	Y	WHEN HAS THE TIME	Y		Y	NO PROBLEMS		
N		N	ELECTRONIC PROBLEMS	N	ELECTRONIC PROBLEMS	Y		Y		Y		Y		Y	

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q7/8/9

WARD ISSUES	OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES	OVERALL RATING	FURTHER COMMENTS
INFO FROM RESIDENTS ONLY	LOCAL AREA CTTEE SUPPORT SERVICES	POOR	SUPPORT SHOULDN'T BE BASED ON POLITICAL REPRESENTATION
HIGHWAYS & LICENSING INFORMATION REGULAR		SATISFACTORY	
		SATISFACTORY GENERALLY	ALLOWANCES COMPARE POORLY WITH OTHER AUTHORITIES. CONCERNED THAT INCREASING DEMANDS PLACED ON COUNCILLORS PARTICULARLY THOSE WITH SPECIAL RESPONSIBILITIES
NOT ADVISED OR COPIED IN ON ISSUES AFFECTING WARD		EXCELLENT	
OFFICER FEEDBACK NORMALLY V. GOOD. OCCASIONALLY HEAR SOMETHING FIRST FROM A RESIDENT		GOOD	
NOT WELL INFORMED. ALERT SYSTEM NOT BAD BUT TIME CONSUMING	PROPER SECRETARIAL SUPPORT SHOULD BE PROVIDED PLUS MODERN IT EQUIPMENT	POOR	BRIEFING ON WHAT IS AVAILABLE WHOULD BE A GOOD START. OFFICERS SEEM RELUCTANT TO DO THIS
CONFIDENT KNOWS ISSUES IN WARD		GOOD	
GOOD		GOOD	BETWEEN 9AM AND 10.30AM TAKES TOO LONG TO GET THROUGH ON 704 6000 NUMBER
HOPES HE IS AWARE. NOT AWARE OF ANY SYSTEM THAT ALERTS TO LOCAL ISSUES COULD BE BETTER		SATISFACTORY	
BADLY INFORMED. OFFICERS SHOULD BE MORE PROACTIVE IN ALERTING OF WARD ISSUES	NONE	SATISFACTORY	SCHEDULING OF EXTRA MEETINGS BY E-MAIL CONTINUES TO BE A NIGHTMARE. SURELY MEETINGS CAN BE PLANNED AHEAD TO AVOID DOUBLE/TREBLE BOOKINGS
NOT PARTICULARLY. OTHER WARD MEMBERS NOT SHARING INFORMATION ABOUT PROBLEMS DEALING WITH AND THEIR RESOLUTION. IN GENERAL RESIDENTS TAKE THEIR PROBLEMS DIRECT TO THE COUNCIL		GOOD GOOD	TIMELY INFORMATION OVER CHANGES IN SENIOR PERSONNEL WOULD BE USEFUL
WARD INFORMATION VERY POOR	NONE	GOOD	

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q7/8/9

WARD ISSUES	OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES	OVERALL RATING	FURTHER COMMENTS
OK	BETTER IT - IMPROVED LAPTOPS, HOME/OFFICE FACILITIES	SATISFACTORY (ONLY JUST)	I HAVE ANSWERED THESE QUESTIONS HONESTLY. SOME MEMBERS MAY THINK THAT THINGS ARE WORKING WELL BUT THEY ARE NOT IDEALLY PLACED TO COMMENT ON UP TO DATE ICT AND BUSINESS WORKING/PRACTICE
GENERALLY OK, ODD OCCASION WHEN INFORMATION LEAKED, LEFT HIM ANGRY AND EMBARRASSED		EXCELLENT	
		GOOD	
VERY POOR. DIFFICULTY IN FINDING OUT INITIATIVES IN WARD PRE MAY 06. PROMPTS THROUGH EGENDA UNHELPFUL. DO NOT POINT TO WHERE INFO IS		SATISFACTORY	PROMPTS SHOULD POINT TO WHERE THE INFORMATION IS
GENERALLY FINE		GOOD	
FEEL WELL INFORMED		SATISFACTORY	
WEEKLY REPORT DESIRABLE		GOOD	IMPRESSION GIVEN THAT KNOWLE LIBRARY STAFF DO NOT SEE THE SURGERY AS BEING IMPORTANT
NEED E-MAIL SYSTEM ALERTING MEMBERS TO SIGNIFICANT ISSUES IN THEIR WARD	BLACKBERRYS AND OTHER NEW TECHNOLOGY	GOOD	
USUALLY WELL INFORMED BUT FURTHER INFORMATION READILY AVAILABLE		GOOD	NEED FOR TRAINING HIGHLIGHTED IN Q6. TO BE ARRANGED AFTER HOLIDAY PERIOD
		EXCELLENT	VERY HELPFUL
	GET RID OF CALL CENTRE. AUTOMATED VOICE INSTRUCTION DREADFUL	SATISFACTORY	MISSED IT TRAINING. CALL CENTRE A HINDRENCE. REQUESTED PRINTED TELEPHONE DIRECTORY
EXTREMELY WELL INFORMED. REGULAR CONTACT WITH RES ASSOCS AND OTHER LOCAL GROUPS		SATISFACTORY	
WELL INFORMED ON REGENERATION. INFORMED BY RESIDENTS ON CLOSURE OF TOILETS. POORLY INFORMED ON ISSUES SUCH AS ANTI SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR		GOOD	STILL FINDING OUT BASICS. IT EQUIPMENT SET UP 3 WEEKS AGO. OFFICERS ALWAYS BEEN POLITE, HELPFUL AND PROFESSIONAL

RESULTS – MEMBER REPRESENTATIONAL ROLE – Q7/8/9

WARD ISSUES	OTHER SUPPORT SERVICES	OVERALL RATING	FURTHER COMMENTS
SOME DEPTS BETTER THAN OTHERS		SATISFACTORY	ALWAYS FOUND OFFICERS HELPFUL. INFORMATION USUALLY AVAILABLE
SATISFACTION		EXCELLENT	TOO GREATER RELIANCE ON E-MAIL. ACCESS 2/3 TIMES A WEEK, RISK OF MISSED APPOINTMENTS ETC. REDUCING ART OF CONVERSATION AND PERSONAL CONTACT.
NO AUTOMATIC NOTIFICATION		SATISFACTORY	