

## Member Development Steering Group

16<sup>th</sup> April 2012

Report of the Assistant Director Governance & ICT

### Councillors' Personal Portfolios

#### Summary

1. This report sets out some provisional ideas about the best way to provide Personal Portfolios for Councillors.

#### Background

2. At a meeting of the Member Development Steering Group (MDSG) held on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2012 it was suggested that a 'Personal Portfolio' be maintained for all Members. This could evidence a Member's Committee experiences and roles undertaken, as well as detailing their attendance at training and development sessions. Officers were also asked to look at the feasibility of providing certificates for training courses attended.

#### Potential Ways of Providing a Personal Portfolio for Members

3. **Option 1** - The most obvious way of providing Councillors with a Personal Portfolio would be for Democratic Services to collate all the information they have relating to an individual Councillor in relation to:
  - Membership of Committees
  - Any Special Responsibilities (Chair, Vice-Chair, Cabinet Member) undertaken
  - Any training/development sessions they have attended.
4. This could then be formulated into one simple document and given to the individual Councillor.
5. **Option 2** - Another possibility would be to use the Committee Management System (ModGov). Each Councillor currently has an individual page on the Council's website and it may be possible to include an additional link within the 'More Information About this Councillor' section on this page to access their Personal Portfolio. This

could be made accessible to the public or visible only on the intranet (i.e. visible to all Members and officers). This would work in a similar way as a Member's Register of Interests, with the onus being on the individual Councillor to keep their record up to date and with Democratic Services uploading newly received information.

6. **Option 3** - Alternatively, with the proposed future redevelopment of 'Zone 47' it may be possible to enable Members to update their own Personal Portfolios online. At this stage how this would work is not clear until further development takes place on the new Zone 47.

### **Consultation**

7. To date, the only consultation that has taken place in relation to this is with the Member Development Steering Group. The Steering Group may like to consider whether any further consultation should take place with Members in relation to this and if so what they would like to consult on.

### **Options**

8. Members can:
  - Approve any of the three options detailed above
  - Suggest alternative options

### **Analysis**

9. The preferred option would be for Members to approve **Option 2** to use the ModGov system to facilitate this. Using ModGov to manage the Personal Portfolio would require some development of the system, which could potentially take two or three months. Members would also need to indicate whether they were happy for the information to be accessible to the public and/ or all Members and officers. If Members envisaged their Personal Portfolio solely being accessible to them then using ModGov to facilitate this would not be the way forward. One of the benefits of using ModGov is that the history of Members' Committee Membership is already stored in the system from 2006 onwards.
10. As stated in a previous paragraph, once in operation the onus would be on Councillors to update their Personal Portfolios in a similar way to the one they use for updating their Register of Interests. Whilst there may be a fair amount of work for officers in the first instance, once the system was up and running and Members were taking responsibility for submitting any amendments the involvement of officers ought not to be unmanageable.

11. **Option 1** is the most basic way forward but is more resource intensive for officers. Officers could provide a Personal Portfolio for any Member who requested it; however it would probably not be feasible to produce this for very far back as it would be very labour intensive. Using this method, Personal Portfolios would only be produced if they were requested and it might not be possible to prioritise them over an officers other work.
12. More generally the Steering Group are asked to consider the benefits of introducing 'Personal Portfolios'. For some of the longer serving Councillors it would not only be incredibly time consuming to produce a comprehensive Personal Portfolio, but accuracy and completeness may be a problem. For some it may only be a snapshot of their time as a Councillor rather than a complete history. If the Steering Group chooses to go ahead with introducing Personal Portfolios they are asked to set a 'start date' for them; the two most obvious dates being either from when ModGov was introduced in 2006 or from the last election in May 2011. This may well, of course be entirely dependent on how and what they envisage the Personal Portfolio being used for.
13. In relation to the issuing of certificates for attendance at training and development sessions; if all Councillors were to want a certificate for every session they attended then this would be very resource intensive and may not be perceived, publically, to be an appropriate use of resources. None of the in-house sessions we offer are accredited and therefore there appears to be little merit in issuing a certificate for them as it would not be a recognised document. However, should any Councillor need 'proof' of training/development sessions attended (e.g. to support a job application) a copy of their Personal Portfolio accompanied by a supporting letter on headed paper could be produced.

### **Council Plan**

14. Having well informed and trained Members will help the Council deliver its key priorities set out within the Council Plan 2011-15.

### **Implications**

15. **Financial** – there are no known financial implications associated with the recommendations within this report.
16. **Human Resources (HR)** – Other than the resource intensity of some of the options over others, which have been mentioned in the analysis section of this report, there are no further HR implications.

17. There are no other known implications associated with the recommendations within this report.

### **Risk Management**

18. In compliance with the Council's risk management strategy there are no risks associated with the contents of this report.

### **Recommendations**

19. Members are recommended to consider which of the 3 options set out in this report, if any, they would like to proceed with.

20. It is recommended that certificates are not issued for any of the in-house training/development sessions offered.

Reason: To look at putting a 'Personal Portfolio' in place for all Councillors.

### **Contact Details**

#### **Author:**

Tracy Wallis  
Scrutiny Officer  
Scrutiny Services  
Tel: 01904 551714

#### **Chief Officer Responsible for the report:**

Andrew Docherty  
Assistant Director Governance & ICT  
Tel: 01904 551004

**Report  
Approved**



**Date** 10.04.2012

**Specialist Implications Officer(s)** None

**Wards Affected:**

**All**

**For further information please contact the author of the report**

**Background Papers:**

None

**Annexes**

None