

Report of Scrutiny Review Panel on Support to Members

June 2007

Contents

1. Introduction
2. Summary Recommendations
3. Local Working
4. Casework
5. Council Papers
6. Technology
7. Members' Secretaries
8. Research and Communications
9. Learning and Development
10. Organisation Committee

Appendix 1 Schedule of Meetings and Witnesses

Appendix 2 Action Plan

1. Introduction

1.1 Elected Members give Local Government its essential legitimacy, accountability, strategic direction, and community focus. Members should therefore be supported appropriately to carry out their roles.

1.2 The Drivers for Improved Support Arrangements:

(i) **The role of a Member is a demanding one:** As more duties and responsibilities have been placed on local authorities, Members have seen workload increase significantly. In-house surveys suggest that Members spend on average 29 hours per week on Council business. This includes County meetings, civic activity, elector issues, officer meetings, outside bodies, preparing for meetings, party activity etc. In many respects the role is becoming a full time job and it is a challenge to balance it with outside work commitments. The call on time is even greater for office holders. It is also important to note that Cheshire County Council has the fourth highest number of constituents per Member (1:10,500) out of England's 21 County Councils.

(ii) **The role of the Member is also one undergoing considerable change:** The 2006 Local Government White Paper – *Strong and Prosperous Communities* – places great emphasis on the “place shaping” and “community leadership” role of the elected Member rather than the traditional role of an elected representative.

(iii) **Delivering the Transforming Cheshire vision:** Transforming Cheshire, a County-wide programme of fundamental change and improvement, is also a key driver for ensuring that both Members and Officers are able to use their time in the most efficient and effective way. “Improving the Community Focus For Elected Members” is one of the ten key pledges of Transforming Cheshire. In addition, a specific project - PP6 - will address the issue of Member Support, by developing and delivering the recommendations that result from this Scrutiny Review.

1.3 Initiating the Review

(i) At the County Council meeting held on 13 July 2006, a Notice of Motion: Getting the Best out of Councillors, was moved by Councillor S R Proctor and seconded by Councillor D T Bateman calling for an informed debate on the provision of Research Assistants for Elected Members.

(ii) The Motion was referred to Performance and Overview Committee on the 4 September who resolved:

“That in considering the Notice of Motion, the Council be advised to recognise the serious financial constraints which currently apply to the Authority, and they be taken into account fully when the issues raised by the Notice of Motion are discussed, including the need for compensatory savings to finance any additional support.”

(iii) The Executive considered the Motion on 20 September. The Motion was not adopted due to *“the serious financial constraints which currently apply to the Authority”*.

(iv) Organisation Committee on 27 September, however, advised that a comprehensive scrutiny review of the current level of support to Members, the resources available and the scope for improvement be commissioned urgently through the Corporate Services Scrutiny Select Committee.

(v) On 21 November the Corporate Services Scrutiny Select Committee approved a Scoping Report and Membership for a Scrutiny Review on Support to Members.

1.3 Scoping

(i) The terms of reference for the Review were as follows:

“To review the nature and resourcing of the support facilities currently provided to Members, and to identify and make recommendations on ways in which Councillors can be better enabled to carry out their developing roles, including under the Transforming Cheshire Programme. The review is to take account of the issues raised in the “Getting the best out of Councillors” Notice of Motion, and the approach taken in other appropriate Councils.”

(ii) The Members of the Review Panel were:

- Councillor E Moore Dutton (Chair)
- Councillor S Wilkinson
- Councillor B Wolstencroft
- Councillor M Byram
- Councillor D Bateman
- Councillor P Byrne
- Councillor S Proctor

1.4 Approach

(i) The Panel met on nine occasions. At the first meeting the Panel agreed to structure its work by seeking to respond to the following questions:

1. How are Members currently supported by the County Council?
2. What support arrangements would be appropriate to enable Members to carry out their developing roles?
3. How can any gap between current Member support and requirements be bridged?

(ii) The Panel was aware of the initial comments of the Executive on the cost implications of providing additional direct support to Members. In addition to

being briefed on the Transforming Cheshire Programme by representatives of Pricewaterhouse Coopers, the Panel at an early meeting was reminded by Mike Flynn (County Secretary) of the direct support arrangements currently in place for Members, noting in particular expenditure in 2006/07 on Secretarial Support (£70,775), Member Learning and Development (£7,968), Members IT (£14,865 on hardware/toners/mobile phone and Blackberry phone calls and line rental), Members Allowances (£904,729). It was noted that there was no dedicated budget for Member's ICT support which the Panel Members considered to be an obstacle in the light of the panel's Terms of Reference requiring it to *"review the nature and resourcing of the support facilities currently provided to Members"*.

(iii) Against this background the Panel's focus has been on the following areas:

- Local Working
- Casework
- Council Papers
- Technology
- Member's Secretaries
- Research and Communications
- Learning and Development
- Corporate Ownership

(iv) A schedule of meetings and witnesses interviewed is in Appendix 1. The Panel also considered the results of a questionnaire which provided the opportunity for all Members of the County Council to comment on existing support arrangement and to suggest potential improvements. The Panel also received evidence of best practice from other Authorities.

1.5 The Panel is grateful to those who have contributed to the Review and particularly those witnesses who agreed to provide evidence.

Councillor Eveleigh Moore Dutton

Chairman of the Support to Members Scrutiny Panel.

2. Executive Recommendations

- 1. *The County Council acknowledge that the role of the Local Member is changing in the context of increased local expectations and the Local Government White Paper.***
- 2. *To enable the role of the Local Member to be developed, early attention be directed to the provision of resources, including those under PP4.***
- 3. *Members be encouraged to use the Customer Access Centre (CAC) as the preferred method of processing routine casework.***
- 4. *Further work be undertaken urgently to commission a stand-alone casework tracking system for Members.***
- 5. *A new report template be introduced forthwith that captures the essential information that Members require for effective understanding and decision making.***
- 6. *Corporate guidance be issued on effective report writing as soon as possible and a re-shaped training course be put in place.***
- 7. *There be a presumption that communications with Members should primarily be through electronic means***
- 8. *Further work be undertaken to establish which additional technologies would benefit Members.***
- 9. *PIN should be replaced as a matter of urgency as part of the Transforming Cheshire project PP6, to meet the needs of all users.***
- 10. *Procedures be put in place to enable individual Members to be notified of changes to and the content of their Web Pages.***
- 11. *The role of the Members Secretaries be restated and promulgated, and be subject to regular review.***
- 12. *The Members Secretaries be involved in the planning of and support for Members IT developments.***
- 13. *The Groups ensure that the most efficient use is made of the Members Accommodation Suite– to meet such needs as “Quiet Areas”, Document Libraries, Work Stations.***
- 14. *A Members page on the intranet be developed as a matter of urgency; the page to be a gateway for Members to access sources of research, briefing papers, e-training, and any other relevant sources of information.***
- 15. *Electronic briefing notes be made available to Members to keep them informed about issues of general and specific interest.***
- 16. *Paper copies of the internal telephone directory and the A to Z of services be made available in the Members Rooms.***

17. More innovative learning approaches be introduced for Members including workshops, action learning sets and distance learning.

18 Greater access to the Corporate Training Programme by Members be encouraged.

19. More 1-2-1 IT training from non-specialist IT trainers be made available to Members

20. More focus be given to community leadership training for Members to support them in their changing roles.

21. The Management Board reaffirm its commitment to supporting all Members to carry out their challenging roles, and Protocols be developed within each Department to ensure that this is embedded in the organisation

22. Clear accountability should be set down for corporate performance on Support to Members and the implementation of the Action Plan.

3. Local Working

3.1 Elected Members have a duty to represent and actively engage with their local communities. While this has always been the case, this aspect of a Member's role appears to be increasing in importance and the support requirements need to be considered.

3.2 The Panel heard from Alison Armstrong, the County Council's Strategic Partnerships Manager, on the changing role of Members in the context of the localism agenda

3.3 Current Support: Members currently engage with their local communities in a variety of ways. Surgeries, local meetings, and correspondence are all important in this context. The County Council, via the Strategic Partnerships Unit, supports Members at the local level to work through Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Locality Boards, bringing together local partners, officers and Members. Whilst not formal decision making bodies with significant financial resources, Locality Boards play a vital role in assessing local needs and ensuring these are fed into the development of policy. They are supported by two dedicated Locality Business Managers who support Members both individually and collectively at the local level. Parish Councils are also a key mechanism for Members to engage with local communities. Liaison takes a variety of forms – e.g. Parish Cluster Meetings – with support from the Strategic Partnerships Unit. Similar support is available for local working within unparished settings. However, what is currently in place would be insufficient to support the growing localism and community leadership agenda..

3.4 In addition to the work of the Strategic Partnerships Unit, Members are supported at the local level by access to comprehensive local statistics provided by Research and Intelligence.

3.5 Requirements: Much progress has been made by the County Council in supporting Members at the local level. However, the agenda is increasing in importance and the nature and scale of support will need to change. The 2006 Local Government White Paper –*Strong and Prosperous Communities* – places great emphasis on the importance of the “front-line Councillor”, on “place shaping” and on “community engagement”. The new Community Call for Action, strengthened LSPs and the Local Area Agreement will demand more focus, effort and activity at the local level for both Members and Officers. The Panel has noted that a potential outcome of the current Local Government Review debate could be in total fewer councillors across Cheshire, but with a greater range of matters to cover. Whatever the outcome of that debate, there will be a major emphasis in future on effective local working by Members. Inevitably, the opportunity to work in this way will be time-consuming. Clarity is needed on the new demands which local working will place on Members and Officers and the resources required to support each and every Member in this new role.

3.6 Bridging the Gap: A key pledge of the Transforming Cheshire Programme is to ensure a greater community focus for elected Members. A specific project has been commissioned – PP4 – which seeks to deliver this pledge through individual Member budgets along with additional officer support and coordination at the local level. Members’ budgets should allow local representatives to deal with local problems efficiently and effectively. Additional, local officer support will assist Members in dealing with local issues, administering local budgets, improving partnership working and engaging local communities.

3.7 As part of the Transforming Cheshire Outline Business Case, this specific project has been allocated £304,000 of annual investment from 2008/09. The project, however, is currently under review by the Executive to ensure that the full implications of the White Paper and the challenges of the local community leadership agenda are taken into account.

RECOMMENDED:

The County Council acknowledge that the role of the local Member is changing in the context of increased local expectations and the Local Government White Paper.

To enable the role of the Local Member to be developed, early attention be directed to the provision of resources, including those under PP4.

4. Casework

4.1 Dealing with enquiries from constituents and organisations is a key part of the Member’s democratic role. Indeed, the Questionnaire to Councillors revealed that a large part of Members’ time is spent responding to enquiries from the public, with 70% of Members rating their casework load as heavy but manageable

4.2 **Current Support:** The Questionnaire revealed that Members use a variety of different sources of support to determine how individual enquiries should be pursued. There is mixed use of Member Secretaries, while County Managers were heavily involved in the process of passing on the enquiry to the relevant officer.

4.3 The bigger challenge appears to be in tracking the process of casework where there seemed to be no consistent approach. In some cases the Members Secretaries performed this role. In other cases phone calls and e-mail reminders to the County Manager were relied upon.

4.4 **Requirements:** There is room for improvement in handling casework. In order to satisfy the principle that Members are a conduit to enable local people to raise concerns and grievances, any new approach needs to be cost effective, transparent and citizen focused.

4.5 **Bridging the Gap**: The Panel heard from Lisa Green, Head of Customer and Local Relations, and Cara Williams, Customer Services Manager, how casework could be processed and managed through the County Council's developing Customer Access Centre. Rather than automatically passing the enquiry to the County Manager, the Member could e-mail or phone the Customer Access Centre who would have the necessary knowledge and expertise to log, direct, and track the enquiry. The Panel acknowledges that the Customer Access Centre can be a powerful tool and would be both a cost effective and customer-focused method for processing Members' routine casework. However it could not provide a complete answer and further work is required urgently to commission a stand-alone casework tracking system for Members.

RECOMMENDED:

Members be encouraged to use the Customer Access Centre (CAC) as the preferred method of processing routine casework. Further work be undertaken urgently to commission a stand-alone casework tracking system for Members.

5. Council Papers

5.1 The length and style of County Council reports, particularly decision papers, create an unacceptable call on Members time, diverting them from making the most effective use of their time. The universal perception is that many reports are too long; poorly structured; with excessive jargon; and are not conducive to the transparent and efficient decision making required in a large organisation.

5.2 **Current Support**: The County Council currently provides a standard report template, brief guidance on writing Council Papers and the "Clearly Cheshire" guide. Nevertheless, most effort is invested into the checks and balances for reports - i.e. ensuring that necessary legal, financial and HR consultation takes place – rather than ensuring the style and length of the paper is of a reasonable standard.

5.3 **Requirements**: Council Papers should be clear, concise and accessible. Bearing in mind the volume of decisions that the County Council is required to make and the need to ensure that all Members are kept informed, a better approach to presenting essential information should be introduced.

5.4 **Bridging the Gap**: A number of proposals that could improve reports for Members were discussed. They included the following:

(a) **The introduction a new report template**: The Panel agreed that a new report template which captured the essential information Members required should be introduced. This would be confined if possible to one side of A4, would include the Recommendations at the outset and the "Decision Route" and would provide hyperlinks to the sources of additional information. To this

could be added a summary of the content and the implications of the decision for the Authority in terms of policy, legal, finance, HR etc. It would also identify which Corporate Priorities the issue covered.

(b) Corporate guidance and training on report writing: At present corporate guidance on report writing in terms of style and format is not readily available. A report writing guide, accessible through the Intranet, was seen as a necessity. In addition, a re-shaped training course, for both officers and Members, which takes into account a new report template, should be commissioned.

(c) The strategic decision making approach: This refers to the method of decision-making often used by consultants and in the private sector. A particular decision is summarised on a single power point slide by outlining various options and their pros and cons. This is the only piece of information that decision makers have access to prior to the meeting. It is intended that a 'knowledgeable expert' talks through the slide during a meeting and that the decision is driven by discussion and dialogue rather than paperwork. The Panel felt that this would be a particularly effective way of presenting strategic information to pre-decision bodies such as Policy Development Panels.

RECOMMENDED:

A new report template be introduced forthwith that captures the essential information that Members require for effective understanding and decision making.

Corporate guidance be issued on effective report writing as soon as possible and a re-shaped training course be put in place.

6. Technology

6.1 There is enormous potential for Information Technology to support elected Members in their developing roles. While not a panacea, IT has the potential to:

- support mobile working
- improve access to information
- improve the management of information;
- enhance communication with the public, colleagues and officers

6.2 Steve Hopson, County Information Services Officer, reminded the Panel of current IT support for Members and potential options for improvement. The Panel also took account of the Questionnaire responses from Councillors.

6.3 Current Support: The basic package of current support includes

- A desktop or a laptop Personal Computer (PC), available to every Member, to use at home for the conduct of County Council business. This may be supplemented with a directly attached printer and an optional fax machine.
- A single PC is also available in each Group Room
- High speed broadband connection enabling access to the intra and internet
- Helpdesk support
- Access to the Political Information Network (PIN), providing access to the Council's key decision making processes and associated documentation. The system, however, has been subject to much criticism by Members.
- A "walled garden" on the intranet for Party Groups although the evidence suggests this is not fully utilised
- Video Conferencing although indications are that this is under-used by both Members and officers.
- In addition to the basic support package, certain Members have a Blackberry and multi-function output device.
- Members' Websites.

6.4 The Questionnaire revealed that Members are increasingly realising the benefits of IT. For example, the intra and internet were joint fourth as source of research information and e mail was joint first as the most common communication method.

6.5 Requirements: The current basic package of support is generally about right but additional technologies and appropriate training e.g. using the Internet could meet Members' individual requirements. The PIN system does however need to be re-developed to improve the search facility and make it more user-friendly. The Members individual Web Pages are an important source of information to local residents and Members should be notified individually when any changes are made to the information thereon.

6.6 Bridging the gap:

RECOMMENDED:

There be a presumption that communications with Members should primarily be through electronic means

Further work be undertaken to establish which additional technologies would benefit Members.

PIN be replaced as a matter of urgency as part of the Transforming Cheshire project PP6, to meet the needs of all users.

Procedures be put in place to enable individual Members to be notified of changes to and the content of their Web Pages.

7. Members' Secretaries

7.1 Members' Secretaries are often the most visible source of support for Members. The Panel heard from Christine Darlington, until recently the Members' Secretary Team Leader, about how the role has evolved over recent years.

7.2 **Current Support:** Each Party Group has a Members' Secretary available to support them. The three Secretaries are accommodated together in the Members' Suite thus providing an element of cover. The main duties of the Secretaries as set down in Job Descriptions are listed below (acknowledging that this is not an exclusive list and that work done for and the relationship with individual Members will vary) :-

- providing personal and secretarial services for Group Leaders, Lead Members, other Members of the Council, the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Council
- screening visitors, telephone calls and correspondence as the first point of Member contact
- undertaking research of a non-political nature
- managing/coordinating Group Leaders' and Lead Members' commitments
- arranging transport and accommodation as required
- supporting Member learning and development, particularly on ICT

It is custom/practice for Group Leaders and Lead Members to have priority (and recognising the size of budgets for which these individuals have responsibility, the Panel has no difficulty with this), but the Panel heard that, generally, this was not to the detriment of support to other Members. The Questionnaire revealed that there is mixed use of Members Secretaries to support casework. It is important to note that the Secretaries are expected to understand and implement Political Conventions/Protocols to ensure that Party Group confidentiality is not breached.

7.3 The Secretaries are expected to service the Group Rooms. These Rooms serve as a combination of meeting/work/reading area. Two of the Group Leaders have their own equipped Offices from which to work.

7.4 **Requirements:** It is self-evident that no County Councillor could work effectively and efficiently without the support of the Members' Secretaries. The amount of use made depends on whether a Member is an Office-holder, but also reflects personal choice. Usage is also occasionally a product of perception of capacity. Recent evidence from other Shire Counties suggests that Cheshire is probably in the lowest quartile of expenditure on this type of support; however, the Panel has not been able to find evidence of a direct link between level of expenditure and Corporate Performance

Assessment (CPA) outcomes. Bearing in mind the changing role of Members and expectations/responsibilities placed upon them, it seems right for the support which the Members' Secretaries can/should provide be kept under regular review to ensure that it is keeping pace with the developing role of Members.

7.5 Bridging the Gap:

RECOMMENDED:

The role of the Members Secretaries should be restated and promulgated, and be subject to regular review.

The Members Secretaries should be involved in the planning of and support for Members IT developments.

The Groups should ensure that the most efficient use is made of the Members Accommodation Suite– to meet such needs as “Quiet Areas”, Document Libraries, Work Stations.

8. Research and Communications

8.1 Lisa Green, County Manager Customer and Local Relations (CLR), briefed the Panel on current research and communications support. The Panel also considered the Members' Questionnaire and the results of a Questionnaire completed by other Authorities regarding Research Support. As in Section 7 strict comparisons with other Authorities are difficult because of definitions; but again there is no discernible link between expenditure and CPA performance.

8.2 **Current Support:** The CLR service currently provides the following:

- Press Releases
- Newsletters – eg Cheshire Matters
- Local Statistics and Research

8.3 In terms of research, the Questionnaire revealed that the majority of Members actively seek out information themselves through their own resources - often out of preference. Executive Members are more likely to seek out information from Officers or from formal Briefings.

8.4 **Requirements:** More could be done to inform Members of critical issues within their local area. Electronic briefing sheets received by Members of Chester City Council were referred to in this context. Members have their own individual needs, style and approach to research, and there are differing views on how appropriate it is to cater for each Member's individual needs from the scarce resources of the County Council. It is difficult to see for example how the appointment of Research Assistants could be funded by the

Council at this time. There was a lack of consensus on the justification for such posts and disagreement within the Panel as to whether the Scrutiny Review was the appropriate mechanism to consider ways in which volunteers or posts funded by the Party Groups could offer a solution. The Panel did agree that, in any event, more could be done to improve access to information to enable Members to support themselves either in the Group Rooms or at home.

8.5 **Bridging the Gap:**

RECOMMENDED

A Members page on the intranet be developed as a matter of urgency; the page to be a gateway for Members to access sources of research, briefing papers, e-training, and any other relevant sources of information.

Electronic briefing notes be made available to Members to keep them informed about issues of general and specific interest.

Paper copies of the internal telephone directory and the A to Z of services be made available in the Members Rooms.

9. Learning and Development

9.1 Ensuring that Members receive the appropriate training to enable them to perform their changing roles is of critical importance. The County Council has of course been awarded the Charter for Member Learning and Development by the North West Employers Organisation. The Panel considered the results of the Members Questionnaire and interviewed Councillor David Newton, Chair of the Member Learning and Development Forum.

9.2 **Current Support:** A full programme of events is drawn up by the Forum to enable all Members to receive topical Briefings and to develop skills appropriate to their roles. Attendance though can be sporadic.

9.3 **Requirements:** Member Learning and Development within the County Council has a strong profile and has received national recognition. Nevertheless, there appears to be room to build on this success through innovation, recognition of differing learning styles and by taking account of the developing local roles of Members.

9.4 **Bridging the Gap:**

RECOMMENDED

More innovative learning approaches be introduced for Members including workshops, action learning sets and distance learning.

Greater access to the Corporate Training Programme by Members be encouraged.

More 1-2-1 IT training from non-specialist IT trainers be made available to Members.

More focus be given to community leadership training for Members to support them in their changing roles.

10. Organisational Culture

10.1 Ensuring that support to Members is of the highest quality and permeates throughout the whole organisation is as much about culture as it is about processes, structures and resources. Transforming Cheshire provides the opportunity to do this.

10.2 **Current Support:** The Members' Questionnaire revealed that, on the whole, Members rated the level of support they received as very good. It appears, however, that this relates mostly to Member Services and that further improvements are required in other Services and Departments to ensure that Members feel informed, involved and empowered to carry out their roles.

10.3 **Requirements:** The County Council needs to ensure that a culture of supporting and empowering Members is developed and owned. It matters not that Members Services lies within Policy and Resources Department and not for example within People and Partnerships or Community Services or elsewhere. It is not one Department's responsibility but all Departments'. The culture needs to be fostered throughout the management structure. Both Executive Members and front-line Councillors must feel that they are working within a supporting culture.

10.4 **Bridging the Gap:**

RECOMMENDED

The Management Board reaffirm its commitment to supporting all Members to carry out their challenging roles and Protocols be developed within each Department to ensure that this is embedded in the organisation

Clear accountability should be set down for monitoring corporate performance on Support to Members and the implementation of the Action Plan.

APPENDIX 1

SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS AND WITNESSES INTERVIEWED

27 November 2006	Carlos Lopez and Scott Bailey, PwC
2 December 2006	Mike Flynn, County Secretary Steve Hopson, County Information Services Officer
6 February 2007	Christine Darlington, retired Member Secretary Lisa Green, County Communications & Research Manager Cara Williams, Customer Services Manager
5 March 2007	Paul Heath, Director of Policy and Resources Alison Armstrong, Strategic Partnership Manager
16 March 2007	Laurence Ainsworth, Corporate Services Project Adviser
10 April 2007	Councillor David Newton, Chair of the Corporate Scrutiny Select Committee and the Member Learning and Development Forum
27 April 2007	Councillor Mrs Gretta Cousin, Executive Member for Finance and ICT
18 May 2007	Draft Panel Report
1 June 2007	Finalisation of Panel Report

APPENDIX 2

Action Plan

Recommendation	Responsibility for Action	Timescale
1. The County Council acknowledge that the role of the Local Member is changing in the context of increased local expectations and the Local Government White Paper	<u>Executive</u> to give early attention to the potential implications of the changing role of the Local Member and to give an opportunity for all Members to be involved in the discussions.	
2. To enable the role of the Local Member to be developed, early attention be directed to the provision of resources, including those under PP4.	<u>County Manager, Customer and Local Relations/ County Policy Officer</u> to log issues for Budget-making process.	
3. Members be encouraged to use the Customer Access Centre (CAC) as the preferred method for processing routine casework.	<u>County Manager, Customer and Local Relations</u> to draw up and implement a strategy to encourage Members to direct casework through the CAC.	
4. Further work be undertaken urgently to commission a stand-alone casework tracking system for Members.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> to report to Organisation Committee.	
5. A new report template be introduced forthwith that captures the essential information that Members require for effective understanding and decision making.	<u>County Secretary</u> to develop and implement a new report template.	

6. Corporate guidance be issued on effective report writing as soon as possible and a re-shaped training course be put in place.	<u>County Secretary/County Manager HR</u> to issue guidance and arrange relevant training for Staff and Members.	
7. There be a presumption that communications with Members should primarily be through electronic means.	<u>County Secretary</u> to include in induction Material for Candidates and New Members.	
8. Further work be undertaken to establish which additional technologies would benefit Members.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> in liaison with the County Secretary to establish a Members Reference Group.	
9. PIN be replaced as a matter of urgency as part of the Transforming Cheshire project PP6, to meet the needs of users.	<u>County Secretary</u> to commission necessary work in line with Members' requirements.	
10. Procedures be put in place to enable individual Members to be notified of changes to, and the content of, their Web Pages.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> to report on control mechanisms.	
11. The role of Members Secretaries be restated and promulgated, and be subject to regular review.	<u>County Secretary</u> to keep under regular review with Group Leaders/Whips.	
12. The Members Secretaries be involved in the planning of and support for Members IT developments.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> to liaise on the practicalities with County Secretary.	

13. The Groups ensure that the most efficient use is made of the Members Accommodation Suite – to meet such needs as “Quiet Areas”, Document Libraries, Work Stations.	<u>Group Whips</u> to initiate discussion on requirements within each Group.	
14. A Members page on the intranet be developed as a matter of urgency; the page to be a gateway for Members to access sources of research, briefing papers, e-training, and any other relevant sources of information.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> , liaising as appropriate, to develop and provide a Members Intranet page.	
15. Electronic briefing notes be made available to Members to keep them informed about issues of general and specific interest.	<u>Head of Communications</u> , liaising with Extended Management Board, to develop template.	
16. Paper copies of the internal telephone directory and the A to Z of services be made available in the Members Rooms.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> to provide and keep up-to-date.	
17. More innovative learning approaches be introduced for Members including workshops, action learning sets and distance learning.	<u>Member Learning and Development Forum</u> to consider most appropriate method of delivery of Training for Members.	
18. Greater access to the Corporate Training Programme by Members be encouraged.	<u>County Manager HR</u> to share Corporate Training Programme with Member Learning and Development Forum.	

19. More 1-2-1 IT training from non-specialist IT trainers be made available to Members.	<u>County Information Systems Officer</u> to make provision for non-specialist IT trainers to be available to Members.	
20. More focus be given to community leadership training for Members to support them in their changing roles.	<u>Director of People and Partnerships</u> to bring forward proposals to Member Learning and Development Forum.	
21. The Management Board reaffirm its commitment to supporting all Members to carry out their challenging roles, and Protocols be developed within each Department to ensure that this is embedded in the organisation.	<u>Chief Executive's Office</u> to ensure Protocols are in place.	
22. Clear accountability be set down for monitoring corporate performance on Support to Members, and the implementation of the Action Plan.	<u>Organisation Committee</u> to clarify at the appropriate time.	