
Meeting: Business Transformation
Date: 22 February 2010
Subject: Task Force Report on enabling Councillors to be leaders in and for their communities
Report of: Director of Business Transformation
Summary: The report proposes a delivery plan to implement the actions for key principle two of the comprehensive community engagement strategy; enabling Councillors to be leaders in and for their communities.

Contact Officer: Peter Fraser, Head of Partnerships and Community Engagement
Public/Exempt: Public
Wards Affected: All
Function of: Council

CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

Council Priorities:

The delivery plan is crucial to the successful implementation of the comprehensive community engagement strategy.

Financial:

none

Legal:

none

Risk Management:

none

Staffing (including Trades Unions):

none

Equalities/Human Rights:

none

Community Safety:

none

Sustainability:

none

RECOMMENDATION(S):




That the Business Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Committee approves the Member Task Force's recommended Delivery Plan for submission to the Executive at its meeting on 4th May 2010.


Background


1. Central Bedfordshire's Local Strategic Partnership is developing a comprehensive community engagement strategy. The aim of the strategy is to give residents greater involvement in the decision-making process with the ultimate objective of delivering better public services by better understanding our communities' needs and issues.
2. The strategy is based on the following five key principles:
 1. Giving more people more opportunities to influence decisions
 2. Enabling Councillors to be leaders in and for their communities
 3. Enhancing the role of Town and Parish Councils
 4. Building the capacity of local people to engage
 5. Ensuring a joined-up, strategic and coordinated partnership approach
3. The strategy has been developed in discussions with Council officers, Ward Councillors, Town and Parish Councils and Partners. A full consultation on the draft strategy was carried out for 13 weeks from October 2009 until January 2010. At the same time a Member task force has been working with officers to develop an action plan for key principle two; enabling Councillors to be leaders in and for their communities, into a delivery plan.
4. The members of the task force were Councillors Tony Brown, Norman Costin, Alison Graham, Mike Gibson, Doreen Gurney, Caroline Maudlin and Marion Mustoe. The group met three times in addition to email communication.
5. It has been agreed that a short pilot programme to test some elements of the delivery plan will be carried out from February with 10 non-executive Ward Councillors.
6. This plan will form part of a larger delivery plan that will be developed to cover all of the key principles in the Community Engagement Strategy, and this will be presented to the Executive for approval on 4th May 2010.



Delivery Plan


7. Overleaf is the Delivery Plan.


	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
1	Provide Councillors with relevant ward-based intelligence, information and 'customer insight'	Issue and update Central Bedfordshire crib sheet (area profile)	Peter Fraser	Updated quarterly	2 nd issue circulated and dates for quarterly updates published	
		Issue and update ward based profiles	Peter Fraser	Updated annually (April)	Ward profiles were issued in October 2009.	
		Monthly update by email to all Councillors to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completed, current and future council consultations • complaints to the council about generic ward issues • community events (e.g. fetes and shows) • Town and Parish Council meetings • Key partnership meetings • Grants available to communities • Partner consultation & engagement activities 	Peter Fraser	Pilot with 10 Councillors starting in Feb 2010		
		Issue a "handy guide" to the main council services (particularly Planning and Highways)	Peter Fraser	By Sept 2010		
		Develop a web page for each ward to include all ward specific information listed above.	Peter Fraser	By Dec 2010		


	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
2	Individual Councillor budgets	Identify other sources of discretionary spend from within the Council that could be diverted to fund Individual Councillor Budgets.	Peter Fraser	By April 2010	Consideration should be given to Cllrs involved in town centre committees, they should not get a personal budget as they will receive funding from the Council through the town centre committee.	
		Identify other service budgets which could be influenced by ward Councillors, for example Parish Partnership fund.	Peter Fraser	By April 2010		
		Issue guidelines to help Councillors in their decision making about how to spend the money.	Peter Fraser	By April 2010		
		Develop a record keeping system for recording how the budgets have been sent.	Peter Fraser	By April 2010		
		Review budget allowance and process.	Peter Fraser	Jan 2011		


	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
3	Support for scrutiny, Councillor Call for Action and response to petitions	Complete the Overview & Scrutiny Coordination Panel (OSCP) review	Bernard Cater	End of Feb 2010		
		Develop a "handy guide" for Councillors and the public on the variety of methods communities can use to raise issues with the Council (e.g. CCfA, petitions, SCA)	Peter Fraser	By Sept 2010		

	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
4	Greater role and involvement in partnerships	Develop a "handy guide" to key partnerships in Central Bedfordshire	Peter Fraser	By Sept 2010		
		Develop a partnership newsletter and circulate to all ward Councillors.	Peter Fraser	Quarterly, starting in April 2010	Funding from EEDA's Targeted Support Fund has been secured to support the development of this newsletter	
		All major LSP decisions should be presented to all Councillors before Executive, such as LAA and Sustainable Community Strategy.	Peter Fraser	Ongoing		
		Ward members to be invited to Central Bedfordshire Forum meetings.	Peter Fraser	14 th Jan 2010		

	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
5	Establish links with Third Sector organisations	Develop a "handy Guide" to the third sector in Central Bedfordshire and the VCS compact.	Peter Fraser	By Sept 2010		
		Notify all members of Third Sector assembly meetings (to be included in the partnership newsletter).	Peter Fraser	3 rd Feb 2010 Frequency to be decided		

	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
6	Case management system for Councillors	Continue to research a case management system and present to Councillors for a final decision.	Sonya Branagan	By April 2010		

	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
7	Member development of community engagement skills	Deliver Councillor training sessions on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IT skills (email, calendar, internet, PDA) • Statutory duties and role of Members in community engagement • How to scrutinise consultation / community engagement • Understanding cultural differences • Listening skills • Conflict resolution • How to say no • Facilitation skills • Chairing public meetings • Consensus building 	Peter Fraser and Kathrin John	Start date to be confirmed		

	Key Activities (Description)	Deliverables (Output)	Lead Officer	Milestones	Current position	
					Comments (if any)	 when completed
8	Dedicated officer support	Set up a dedicated telephone number for the helpdesk for Councillors to use to ensure a fast response.	Hannah Richards	By end Feb 2010		

Next Steps

8. That the Business Transformation Overview and Scrutiny Committee approves the Member Task Force's recommended Delivery Plan for submission to the Executive at its meeting on 4th May 2010.

Location of papers: Melbourne House, Bedford