

MEMBERS' SERVICES PROVISION

Accountable Officer: John Moffoot (Head of Corporate Administration)

Author: Elizabeth Richardson (Members' Services Officer) - MK 252629

1. Purpose

- 1.1 To present a package of suggested Members' Services to support a proposed new Democratic Structure.

2. Summary

- 2.1 The proposed introduction of new Democratic Structures made it essential that the Council should to review the range of services provided to Members and to devise a package of services suited to the changing needs of Members.

3. Recommendations

- 3.1 That a package of services for Members be adopted and officers requested to present the package fully costed to the next meeting of the Sub-Committee.

4. **Background**

- 4.1 At the meeting of the Members Services Sub-Committee on 9 September 1999, it was resolved that a report should be produced reflecting the separation of the Executive and Scrutiny roles and the services required to support Members undertaking those roles (Minute MS4/00 refers).

5. **Issues and Choices**

- 5.1 A package of services has been devised to try and meet the changing needs of Members. The level of services provided range from the basic package available to all Members, through to the specific needs of the Leader of the Council.
- 5.2 The details of these packages are attached at **Annex A**.
- 5.3 Detailed reports on the provision of IT and training are at **Annexes B and C** respectively.

6. **Implications**

6.1 Environmental

Enhanced IT provision to Members could reduce the amount of paper used by both Members and officers in communicating with each other and reduce the requirement for 3 x weekly courier deliveries, so reducing fuel consumption and the harmful effects of pollution created by the use of the courier's van.

6.2 Equalities

Services provided to Members under the new Executive/Scrutiny structure are designed to help all Members participate better in the business of the Council and in particular, to fulfil their representational roles within the community.

6.3 Financial

The cost of these services will be at least £226,346. Much of this is already provided for in other budgets, but a significant amount of growth is likely.

This does not include the cost of salaries for Members' Services Staff, accommodation, printing costs for agendas and minutes etc.

Eventually, there could also be a reduction in expenditure on paper, printing and courier costs.

6.4 Legal

The new Democratic Structures are part of the Government's proposed legislation to modernise local government and the provisions of such legislation may need to be taken into consideration when deciding the type and level of services to Members.

6.5 Staff and Accommodation

IT provision in the Group Rooms has meant some re-arrangement of the layout of the Group Rooms, but where possible, disruption has been kept to a minimum.

7. **Conclusions**

7.1 To support Member's in their new roles, it is essential that they are fully supported by a range of appropriate services which enable them to fulfil their roles to the full.

7.2 It needs to be recognised that enhanced provision of services for Members will not be able to be contained within the existing budget.

Background Papers: None