

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Resources, Staffing, Information and
Customer Services Portfolio Holder

AUTHOR/S: Democratic Services Manager

19 December 2006

MEMBERS' DIARIES 2007

Purpose

1. To consider whether to produce the following information for Members in 2007-2008:
 - (a) Annual Calendar from 1 August 2007.
 - (b) Updated civic information following the May 2007 election.

Background

2. The issue of diaries and updates to Members was considered by the previous Portfolio Holder in June 2005. He expressed the view that diaries were not essential and could be dispensed with as a cost saving, however no formal decision was taken. The current Portfolio Holder has requested that the matter be revisited at the present time.

Considerations

3. During the current year calendars have been produced and issued to the end of July 2007. Due to work pressures and staff shortages, the latest update on civic information has only recently been completed and have yet to be printed and distributed. The Portfolio Holder is also requested to consider, therefore, whether to proceed with the distribution of updates during the current civic year.
4. The cost of producing annual calendars and updates for distribution to around 90 Members and Officers is around £800. This figure could be subject to a reduction if fewer copies were printed, for example through distribution to all Members only or to Members on request. A more significant saving would accrue in terms of officer time, however, as the collation of civic information following each election takes around one month to compile and check (whilst the availability of information on the website and Intranet has improved officers' ability to access it, such information still has to be verified as accurate).

Options

5. The options for the Portfolio Holder are as follows:
 - (a) Continue to produce full annual calendar and updated civic information for the 2007-2008 civic year at a cost of around £800.
 - (b) Produce only the calendar and dispense with the information updates.
 - (c) Produce only the updates and dispense with the calendars.
 - (d) Cease producing any of this information in hard copy.

6. Ceasing altogether the production of diaries will involve small annual monetary savings and a more significant saving in terms of officer time. Such a move would also comply with the Council's desire to minimise the amount of paper produced, particularly when all of the information contained in the diary is available on the website and Intranet. These efficiencies need to be set against the convenience of providing a resource by which Members and lead officers are able to manage their busy schedules and access a wealth of useful information on local councillors and services in one place.

Recommendation

7. The Portfolio Holder is invited to determine whether, and to what extent, to continue to produce Members' diaries in light of the above information.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

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