



AGENDA

For a meeting of the
ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

to be held on

THURSDAY, 11 JANUARY 2007

at

2.30 PM

in

**COMMITTEE ROOM 1, COUNCIL OFFICES, ST. PETER'S HILL,
GRANTHAM**

Duncan Kerr, Chief Executive

Panel
Members: Councillor Robert Conboy, Councillor Mrs Joyce Gaffigan,
Councillor Mano Nadarajah (Vice-Chairman), Councillor Norman
Radley, Councillor Robert Murray Shorrock, Councillor Michael
Taylor (Chairman), Councillor Thomas John Webster and Councillor
Avril Williams

Scrutiny Officer: Paul Morrison 01476 406512 p.Morrison@southkesteven.gov.uk

**Members of the Panel are invited to attend the above meeting to
consider the items of business listed below.**

1. COMMENTS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To receive comments or views from members of the public at the Panel's discretion.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The Panel to be notified of any substitute members.

3. APOLOGIES

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to declare any interests in matters for consideration at the meeting.

5. ACTION NOTES

The notes of the meeting held on 17th November 2006 are attached for information.
(Enclosure)

6. FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE

7. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

- Feedback from the Democratic Review Working Group
- Notes from the Access and Modernisation Working Group

(Enclosures)

8. GATEWAY REVIEW 3

The panel to undertake gateway review 3.

(Paperwork to follow to panel members)

9. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

(Enclosure)

10. WORK PROGRAMME

(Enclosure)

11. FINANCIAL REPORTS

12. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Representatives on outside bodies to give update reports.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, WHICH THE CHAIRMAN, BY REASONS OF SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES, DECIDES IS URGENT.

WORKING STYLE OF SCRUTINY

The Role Of Scrutiny

- To provide a “critical friend” challenge to the Executive as well as external authorities and agencies
- To reflect the voice and concerns of the public and its communities
- Scrutiny Members should take the lead and own the Scrutiny Process on behalf of the public
- Scrutiny should make an impact on the delivery of public services

Remember...

- Scrutiny should be member led
- Any conclusions must be backed up by evidence
- Meetings should adopt an inquisitorial rather than adversarial style of traditional local government committees



MEETING OF THE ENGAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANEL

FRIDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 2006 12.30 PM

PANEL MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Craft
Councillor Exton
Councillor Mrs Gaffigan
Councillor Radley

Councillor Shorrock
Councillor M Taylor (Chairman)
Councillor Webster
Councillor Mrs Williams

OFFICERS

Scrutiny Officer
Strategic Director
Service Manager, Business Transformation & Information Management (notes 131&132)
Service Manager, Democracy (note 133)
Elections Officer (note 133)
Service Manager, HR & Diversity (note 134)
Corporate Head of Finance & Resources
Customer Services Manager (note 126)
Electoral Services Assistant (note 124)
Scrutiny Support Officer

OTHER MEMBERS PRESENT

Councillor Carpenter – portfolio holder

118. MEMBERSHIP

The panel was informed that Councillor Exton was replacing Councillor Conboy and Councillor Craft was replacing Councillor Nadarajah for this meeting only.

119. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

120. ACTION NOTES

The notes of the meetings on 21st September 2006 and 18th October 2006 were noted.

121. FEEDBACK FROM THE EXECUTIVE

There was nothing to report.

122. UPDATES FROM LAST MEETING

There was nothing to report.

123. REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS

Democratic Review

Councillor Shorrock reported on feedback from the Democratic Review Working Group. He apologised for not having been able to present the group's report at the panel's last meeting. He thanked the group, which had included a range of stakeholders within the community, for their work on the report. In reporting to the panel, he focussed on those recommendations that had not been accepted.

In relation to recommendation 5, the group had found that a number of national projects, mainly involving young people, had received strong positive feedback and therefore these should not be ignored by the council. Regarding recommendation 9, members going into schools would be accompanied by a teacher and therefore should only require the minimum level criminal record check.

Conclusion:

That the council members of the Democratic Review Working Group reform to report back to the Engagement DSP with further evidence and clarification in support of those recommendations not accepted by the panel.

Access and Modernisation

Notes from the working group meetings on 27th September and 25th October 2006 were presented to the panel. The portfolio holder responded to questions from the panel. There was one recommendation from the working group and this was considered by the panel.

Conclusion:

To request the portfolio holder ensures that a risk assessment be undertaken to assess the way forward with UPS.

124. LOCAL FORUMS: A TOWN COUNCIL FOR GRANTHAM

At the request of the Grantham Local Forum, the panel considered a report on a town council for Grantham. The Electoral Services Assistant responded to members' questions on this subject. He explained that the Grantham Charter Trustees were to consider provisions within the recently published white paper, as the power to create town and parish councils would be devolved to district councils. The panel discussed in detail differing opinions on whether the people of Grantham wanted, or would benefit from, a town council. There was a general consensus that greater public consultation was necessary and that a

platform for public debate should be facilitated by the council. Councillor Craft requested that his abstention from the first conclusion be recorded.

Another member suggested that the monitoring of recommendations from all local forums be recorded.

Conclusion:

To recommend to cabinet that it facilitates the provision of a public assembly held in a venue such as the local leisure or arts centre, to discuss formulating a working party to consider a town council for Grantham.

That the Engagement DSP adds to its work programme the consideration of the role and function of councillors in the 21st century.

The portfolio holder be recommended that progress with feedback from all local forums be recorded on the council's website and/or community portals.

125. TRAVEL CONCESSIONS

The Strategic Director presented report MA2 on behalf of the service manager for Performance Management and Engagement. The report outlined payments made to bus operators for bus pass use, number of new bus passes issued to customers by month, and issues of travel vouchers. The director reported that this issue had mainly been reviewed by the Resources DSP and had been dealt with confidentially because of the scrutiny of commercial information.

A minimum of £400,000 would be required to start cross-border travel for bus passes and this would increase substantially in response to a number of variables. Central government had announced that cross-border travel would be implemented as a statutory minimum service from 2008. No recommendations had come from within the council to make cross-border travel available before 2008.

Cross-border travel, the benefits and costs were discussed by the panel. The fundamental problems with public transport were also considered. The Corporate Head of Finance and Resources reminded members on the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) adopted by council that had identified a review of the budget pressures on travel. Only limited resources were available to vary the current policy of travel concessions. Guidance on the new statutory arrangements would be available in the autumn of 2007 and early indications showed that local authorities would be required to pay one-off costs.

The portfolio holder reported on his unbiased position on the matter and his ideals for equity within the service.

Conclusion:

To keep travel concessions under review by monitoring the take-up and costs of bus passes and travel vouchers.

126. UPDATE REPORT - FRONTFACING TELEPHONY AND CUSTOMER SERVICE STANDARDS

The Business Management Services Partnership Project Officer presented report CSV46, which provided an update on front-facing telephone extensions and other customer service standards.

This information was now available on the intranet and a new performance reporting structure would be in place soon. The Talk to Me protocol would be introduced to senior managers at a forthcoming training day and so improvements following this were anticipated.

Conclusion:

To note the report.

The agenda item for gateway review 2 of service plans was moved to the end of the agenda as it was likely that this would be considered with the press and public excluded.

127. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY STEERING GROUP

The notes from the meetings of the Equalities and Diversity Steering Group on 31st August 2006 and 6th October 2006 were noted. The remit and membership of the group was clarified.

128. BEST VALUE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

The best value performance indicators were noted.

The Business Transformation and Information Management Service Manager reported on the indicator SK22 relating to transactions provided at area offices, which was currently under performing. He explained that the delays in establishing the customer service centre in Grantham had affected progress at the area offices but this could now proceed.

129. WORK PROGRAMME

Noted with updates.

130. REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

There was nothing to report.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

DECISION:

That in accordance with section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remaining items of business because of the likelihood that otherwise exempt information, as described in paragraphs 1-4 of schedule 12A of the act, would be disclosed to the public.

131. GATEWAY REVIEW 2: CUSTOMER SERVICES

The Business Transformation and Information Management Service Manager gave a presentation on behalf of the Customer Services Manager on each section of the 2007/08 service plan.

Section 1 – Setting the scene: the context and drivers of the service were outlined.

Section 2 – Where are we now?: key achievements for the service were identified and explanation given on how the service compared to other providers. Members were concerned about the low customer satisfaction feedback identified in the plan. The officer understood that these figures had been recorded prior to the opening of the customer service centre and he would therefore expect these figures to significantly improve.

Section 3 – Where do we need to be?: the completed SWOT and PESTLE analyses were scrutinised. The main goal of the service was to provide the first point of contact for customers and deal with at least 80% of enquiries at first point of contact.

Section 4 – How do we get there?: an action plan with several objectives for the service was included in the plan. The officer was asked about customer service points at area offices and the long term plan for these. There was currently no planned investment for additional council-branded customer access points other than at the area offices.

Section 5 – Gershon & Efficiency: savings had been identified in the plan, mainly achieved from back office staff transfer.

Section 6 – Financial Summary: a financial analysis sheet was circulated at the meeting, but the financial summary did require completion.

Section 7 – Risk: several areas of risk were identified in the plan.

Conclusions:

Having reviewed the 2007/08 service plan for Customer Services against the Gateway Review 2 checklist (plus an additional question: where can savings be made?), the Engagement DSP found that:

1. All budget figures for the current year and future years had been identified in the service plan, although costs for support services were likely to be changed following compilation of all plans.
2. All staffing resources had been identified and costed in the service plan.
3. All other relevant costs had been identified and included in the service plan.
4. There was clear quantification of how the service contributed towards the council priorities.
5. Any relevant inflationary increases had been absorbed but this needed to be revisited at the next gateway review.
6. The balanced score card was complete but evidence was lacking.
7. There were currently no income streams to identify.
8. Gershon efficiency savings had been identified and evidenced.
9. Risks had been identified and actions for mitigation applied.
10. Major deviations to the current budget had been identified in staffing costs.
11. No issues requiring equality costs, other than training, had been identified.
12. Section 4 of the service plan had been adequately completed and resources costs identified.
13. The SWOT analysis had been completed.
14. The PESTLE analysis had been completed.
15. The financial summary had not been completed, although the analysis sheet had been completed.
16. Major procurement proposals for the next three years had been identified.
17. There was insufficient evidence to show that service staff had been consulted on compilation of the service plan.
18. There were currently no capital projects identified for the next 3-5 years.
19. Opportunities for savings would be considered in light of stringent budget restrictions.

132. GATEWAY REVIEW 2: BUSINESS TRANSFORMATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

The Business Transformation and Information Management Service Manager gave a presentation on each section of his 2007/08 service plan.

Section 1 – Setting the scene: the context and drivers of the service and how it related to the council's category A priority: Access were outlined.

Section 2 – Where are we now?: responses from customer satisfaction surveys, key achievements and service comparisons were summarised in the plan.

Section 3 – Where do we need to be?: the completed SWOT and PESTLE analyses were scrutinised. The main goal of the service was to provide support

to the organisation in business transformation and ICT infrastructure.

Section 4 – How do we get there?: an action plan with detailed objectives for the service was included. Matters of clarification were provided for the panel.

Section 5 – Gershon & Efficiency: savings had been identified and detailed in the plan, mainly from modernisation of services, customer services and utilisation of remote software. Areas for potential savings were outlined.

Section 6 – Financial Summary: an updated financial summary sheet was circulated.

Section 7 – Risk: several areas of risk were identified in the plan.

Conclusions:

Having reviewed the 2007/08 service plan for Business Transformation and Information Management against the Gateway Review 2 checklist (plus an additional question: where can savings be made?), the Engagement DSP found that:

- 1. All budget figures for the current year and future years had been identified in the service plan.**
- 2. All staffing resources had been identified and costed in the service plan.**
- 3. All other relevant costs had been identified and included in the service plan.**
- 4. There was clear quantification of how the service contributed towards the council priorities.**
- 5. Any relevant inflationary increases had been absorbed.**
- 6. The balanced score card was not complete.**
- 7. There were currently no income streams to identify, although shared services were being explored.**
- 8. Gershon efficiency savings had been identified and evidenced.**
- 9. Risks had been identified and actions for mitigation applied, although the risk relating to LSVT could now be removed.**
- 10. Major deviations to the current budget had been identified in staffing costs.**
- 11. Equality costs were not relevant.**
- 12. Section 4 of the service plan had been adequately completed and resources costs identified.**
- 13. The SWOT analysis had been completed.**
- 14. The PESTLE analysis had been completed.**
- 15. The financial summary had been completed.**
- 16. No major procurement proposals for the next three years had been identified. Work on the area offices had been identified in the council's capital programme and so may be required to be identified in the service plan.**
- 17. Service staff had been consulted on compilation of the service plan.**
- 18. There were currently no capital projects identified for the next 3-5**

years.

19. Opportunities for savings had been considered as part of the Gershon savings.

133. GATEWAY REVIEW 2: DEMOCRACY

The Democracy Service Manager and Electoral Services Manager gave a presentation on each section of the 2007/08 Democracy service plan.

Section 1 – Setting the scene: the context and drivers of the service were outlined together with a current staff structure chart. The key issues facing the service were the district and parish elections in May 2007, significant change brought about by the Electoral Administration Act 2006 and the local government white paper. Preparation for the election would start in January 2007 and would be undertaken by the whole team alongside regular committee support work. The Electoral Administration Act had required significantly more work to ensure a higher response rate, personal identifiers for postal voters and enhanced duties on the electoral registration officer during the register canvass. Voters could now register up to eleven days before an election, thereby increasing pressures on election staff to keep candidates up to date. A “golden threads” diagram showed how the service supported the vision and priorities of the council. A completed balanced scorecard was circulated at the meeting.

Section 2 – Where are we now?: key achievements for the service were identified in the plan and the officer outlined a benchmarking exercise, which had revealed that the service operated with less than average staff but serviced a high number of meetings.

Section 3 – Where do we need to be?: the completed SWOT and PESTLE analyses were included in the plan.

Section 4 – How do we get there?: an action plan with several objectives were included.

Section 5 – Gershon & Efficiency: savings were identified.

Section 6 – Financial Summary: the financial summary was included together with business cases for deviations.

Section 7 – Risk: risks were identified in the plan, mainly associated with reduced staff resources.

Conclusions:

Having reviewed the 2007/08 service plan for Customer Services against the Gateway Review 2 checklist (plus an additional question: where can savings be made?), the Engagement DSP found that:

1. All budget figures for the current year and future years had been

identified in the service plan.

- 2. All staffing resources had been identified and costed in the service plan.
- 3. All other relevant costs had been identified and included in the plan.
- 4. There was clear quantification of how the service contributed towards the council priorities.
- 5. Inflationary increases, other than increased staffing costs, had been absorbed.
- 6. The balanced score card was complete and evidenced.
- 7. There were currently no income streams to identify.
- 8. Gershon efficiency savings had been identified and evidenced.
- 9. Risks had been identified and actions for mitigation applied.
- 10. Major deviations to the current budget had been identified.
- 11. Equality costs had been identified in relation to elections and were incorporated into the existing service.
- 12. Section 4 of the service plan had been adequately completed and resources costs identified.
- 13. The SWOT analysis had been completed.
- 14. The PESTLE analysis had been completed.
- 15. The financial summary had been completed.
- 16. Major procurement proposals for the next three years had been identified.
- 17. Service staff had been consulted on compilation of the service plan during team meetings and preparation stages.
- 18. There were currently no capital projects identified for the next 3-5 years.
- 19. The only opportunity for savings would be to reduce support to non-essential meetings such as working groups.

134. **GATEWAY REVIEW 2: HUMAN RESOURCES & CORPORATE EMPLOYEE SERVICES**

The HR&OD Service Manager gave a presentation on each section of her 2007/08 service plan.

Section 1 – Setting the scene: the context and drivers of the service were outlined. The service had been reviewed by the whole team, which had found that external drivers were dominant and self awareness was high.

Section 2 – Where are we now?: methods of meeting customer expectations were outlined, and feedback had been identified as generally positive. Key achievements and comparisons to other authorities were also identified. Benchmarking had showed that the council's service came at a 40% lower cost per employee than the benchmarking club average, and yet service requirements were high.

Section 3 – Where do we need to be?: the completed SWOT and PESTLE analyses were included in the plan.

Section 4 – How do we get there?: an action plan with several objectives for the

service was included in the plan. This had been streamlined since the previous gateway review and related to core human resources services. In relation to equalities, the service had the highest number of critical policies to be assessed. Further work was required on consultation and achievement of the equalities level 3 standard.

Section 5 – Gershon & Efficiency: savings had been identified in the plan and related mainly to reduced sickness absences. Estimates had been made for efficiencies with online recruitment.

Section 6 – Financial Summary: the financial summary reflected a zero-based approach but was yet to be completed.

Section 7 – Risk: three areas of risk were identified in the plan.

Conclusions:

Having reviewed the 2007/08 service plan for Human Resources and Corporate Employee Services against the Gateway Review 2 checklist (plus an additional question: where can savings be made?), the Engagement DSP found that:

- 1. All budget figures for the current year and future years had been identified in the service plan, although not yet allocated.**
- 2. All staffing resources had been identified and costed in the service plan.**
- 3. All other relevant costs had been identified and included in the service plan.**
- 4. There was clear quantification of how the service contributed towards the council priorities.**
- 5. Any relevant inflationary increases had been absorbed but not yet evidenced.**
- 6. The balanced score card was complete and evidenced.**
- 7. There were currently no income streams to identify.**
- 8. Gershon efficiency savings had been identified and evidenced.**
- 9. Risks had been identified and actions for mitigation applied.**
- 10. Major deviations to the current budget had been identified.**
- 11. Equality costs had been identified.**
- 12. Section 4 of the service plan had been adequately completed and resources costs identified.**
- 13. The SWOT analysis had been completed.**
- 14. The PESTLE analysis had been completed.**
- 15. The financial summary had not been completed.**
- 16. No major procurement proposals for the next three years had been identified.**
- 17. Service staff had been consulted on compilation of the service plan.**
- 18. There were currently no capital projects identified for the next 3-5 years.**
- 19. Opportunities for savings should be achieved through online recruitment.**

135. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 4.45p.m.

Agenda Item 7

UPDATE FROM THE DEMOCRATIC REVIEW WORKING GROUP

Having been asked by the Engagement DSP for further comments on each of its recommendations, the Democratic Review Working Group met on 15th December 2006 to consider the responses from the DSP. Their views are recorded in the table below.

No	Working Group Recommendation	DSP response	Working group feedback
1.	<i>An annual publication should be produced about how citizens could influence the council and other decision making bodies including health trusts. The publication should also contain information about standing as a councillor, expectations and benefits and information about political groups.</i>	To support this recommendation in principle but would consider the circulated document and evaluate for the next meeting of the panel.	Accept.
2.	<i>Online citizens jury should be fully evaluated and the concept developed and the process integrated into the annual review of priorities.</i>	To support this recommendation.	Accept.
3.	<i>The concept of citizens involvement in council working groups should be explored in developing policy and service areas.</i>	To support this recommendation and encourage DSP Chairmen to welcome members of the public onto scrutiny working groups.	Accept. The role of parish councillors in partnership with the district could be further explored. Working groups should consult with a number of stakeholders, including parish councils.
4.	<i>A citizens engagement fund should be established to cover expenses incurred by citizens actively involved in consultative exercises. This would cover travel, childcare etc.</i>	To support the principle of this recommendation but amend the last sentence to read: "This would cover agreed expenses".	Accept but there needs to be a consistent approach to paying expenses to ensure that members of the public and other stakeholders feel that their contribution is valued. Criteria should therefore be developed by the council.
5.	<i>The council should engage in national initiatives, such as I am a Councillor Get Me Out of Here and Democracy Day on an annual basis and councillors are encouraged to be involved.</i>	To support the recommendation, subject to the removal of "I am a Councillor Get Me Out of Here and"	There may have been a misunderstanding of this particular activity. It does not involve aspects of the "celebrity" version on the television but is a workshop based tool in a range of other activities. Feedback from young people on this has been very positive.

6.	<i>A link to the council's webpages should be included on the Youth Parliament site and issues under discussion are provided to the parliament.</i>	To support this recommendation.	Accept.
7.	<i>Local Youth Councils should be able to feed issues into the engagement DSP and 6 monthly Youth Area Forums are held, facilitated by the council and the youth service.</i>	To support the recommendation from the working group but amended to read: "Local youth councils should be informed and encouraged to join the local forums and the six-monthly youth area forums are held, jointly facilitated by the council and the youth service".	Accept but ownership by an officer is required to help link up these structures.
8.	<i>Local Youth Councils should be approached with their view on being able to nominate members for co-option onto the district and parish/town councils.</i>	The chairman stipulated that the constitution did not provide for this recommendation and that when co-option to the council had been attempted in the past, it had been unsuccessful – To not support the recommendation.	Accept.
9.	<i>A group of councillors should be trained to be able to go into schools to deliver and enhance the democracy and political engagement part of the curriculum.</i>	To ask the working group to investigate the issues raised by the panel and report back at the next meeting.	Although the concerns of the DSP are acknowledged. The group emphasis the need to ensure that in-school activities are more interesting for students. Where this recommendation has taken place, feedback has been very positive. Councillors in the school would be supervised and would therefore not require a CRB check. The group recommends further that a letter be sent to all secondary schools in the district to gauge their interest. Training can be provided in a number of different

			ways at cost.
10.	<i>The council should offer placements for school students to gain experience about what the council does and how decisions are made.</i>	To support the recommendation.	Accept.
11.	<i>The council should explore a structured programme and internships to complement citizenship education.</i>	To ask the working group to provide further clarification on this recommendation for the next meeting of the panel.	That voluntary placements be structured for those wanting experience in the council, to work closely with councillors and the decision-making process. Specific arrangements to be considered by the panel and up to the portfolio holder for finalisation.
12.	<i>An annual school representative assembly should be held that will include student representatives from all secondary schools in the district to advise on youth priorities. The council sets aside a sum of money each year to be allocated to the priority agreed by the assembly.</i>	The panel disagreed with this recommendation because of the financial implications and the conflict with the established method of reviewing the council's priorities - To not support this recommendation.	The group acknowledges the concern of the panel but explains further that a budget allocation should be set aside each year. It would not have to be excessive because the aim is to simulate the decision-making process. This approach had been very successful with the latest online jury at Walton Girls' High School, who had to decide how to spend £1,000. Further exploration could be given to provide this facility to youth councils.
13.	<i>All citizens on reaching the age of 18 should be given a citizens pack that includes information about their democratic rights and what this means. Details should also be given of local councillors, MPs etc and how to contact them. A copy of the citizens publication should be included.</i>	The panel considered that this was, and should be, already carried out by the political parties and not the council - To not support this recommendation.	The group asks that this be reconsidered given that there should be communication of a neutral nature, especially as not all political groups have the finances for this.
14.	<i>The council should develop a democratic engagement team to work with neighbourhoods on community activities and to</i>	The panel considered this recommendation to be excessive - To not support this recommendation.	This team could be appointed internally and build on existing teams. However, there was no consensus on the specific

	<i>promote democratic engagement initiatives, potentially working with other agencies.</i>		nature of the team.
15.	<i>The council should work with South Lincs CVS to support grassroots neighbourhood initiatives that create local empowerment networks of organisations and individuals effecting change in their communities. These should be recognised and integrated into consultative machinery for council.</i>	The panel considered this recommendation to be ambivalent - To not support this recommendation.	The council should identify and work with voluntary/community organisations in the district and incorporate them in consultation. Recommend further that South Lincolnshire CVS be invited to provide a presentation to the Engagement DSP.
16.	<i>The council should link into pre-election awareness campaigns and develops resources that can be used by key stakeholder groups and organisations to raise awareness about the importance of voting in elections.</i>	The panel considered this recommendation to conflict with the work of local politicians – To not support this recommendation.	Candidacy and voting should be promoted well in advance of elections by the council as well as politicians. This was particularly important for parish councils. The electoral team were sending awareness cards this year to all households – the group recommendations that this be done in coordination with the communications team to ensure promotion is done on how to stand for election.
17.	<i>The facility to poll other citizens on questions should be available for citizens to utilise via the council website.</i>	To not support these recommendations.	Recommend that the Engagement DSP receives a presentation from ro1 solutions, and another local authority, on the options and costs of various IT-based engagement projects.
18.	<i>On-line discussion forum via the portals should be used to create dialogue-based consultation on priority areas. Members and officers should be trained in effectively employing this approach as a key element of consultation.</i>		
19.	<i>Facility should be developed to allow council meetings to be media streamed on line and an archive of meetings be available on the website.</i>		

20.	<p><i>Public online question and answer facility should be made available for citizens to ask members questions and a record of the questions and answers should be maintained in a list archive.</i></p>		
21.	<p><i>There should be further exploration on the issues related to direct democracy (e.g. binding referendums) and this should be considered by the on-line jury and local forums.</i></p>		

ACCESS AND MODERNISATION WORKING GROUP

Thursday 21st December 2006
2.00p.m.

Present:

Councillor Kirkman
Councillor Nadarajah
Councillor M Williams

Andy Nix
Marion Fox
Rebecca Chadwick

Apologies: Councillor Carpenter (observer)

1. Notes from last meeting

These were accepted.

The recommendation on UPS had been accepted by the portfolio holder at the Engagement DSP.

Progress with the budget preparation was reported. There had been difficulties in demonstrating areas for growth in the IT and Customer Services plans because of the transfer of services and staff. Work was continuing on this. It was noted that the recent budget working group meeting had recommended, with a few exceptions, that all areas of growth be refused unless specific resources become available. The officers therefore advised that the council had to be realistic in its expectations of IT services.

The need for members to make their contribution to the efficiency of the council was also discussed. The out-of-hours IT service for members provided by HBS was highlighted.

The capital programme in relation to the development of the area offices was discussed.

2. Update about the extension of CSC into the reception area

The officers explained that the extension, now complete, had been provided to allow room for the switchboard telephonists and that this had been achieved with minimal compromise of the designs to the staff rest area.

The group discussed operational performance of the customer services centre. There had been initial problems with building control and so this had been removed from the centre. Work was underway to review the

problems and return the service to the centre. There had also been some sickness absence, which had affected the service. Cover for this was being arranged.

Various other related issues were discussed. Some teething problems had been greater than expected but generally the customer services centre was a success. More staff would be trained to deal with different service enquiries.

One member of the group was concerned that large cash payments, mainly for non-domestic rates, was being paid at the centre and that this was difficult for the assistants to handle discretely. The officers advised that this was only an exceptional circumstance but further analysis would be done on this.

3. Analysis of call volumes

One member of the group had asked for this agenda item because he had received complaints about notification letters for the roll out of wheelie bins being delivered only a few days before delivery. This has caused significant telephone calls to the centre, causing delays. The officers explained what they had done to remedy the situation and that they would liaise further with the relevant officers to ensure that work between the two services was better coordinated.

Recommendation: That the Access and Engagement Portfolio Holder be asked to ensure that there is better coordination between the Street Scene Service and the Customer Services Centre.

4. Request from Resources DSP: to consider a staff survey for intranet needs.

The officers explained that this issue had also been identified by the Operational Management Team, because the intranet did not operate at its full potential. A staff user group would be set up to look at this and it was likely that emails would be sent to staff to ask what they would like on the intranet.

A member of the group added that he did not think he could access the staff survey results on the intranet, and another added that he could not access the intranet with his county council laptop. The officers would look into this.

5. Access to Cedar

Having received a request from another member to consider member access to Cedar, the response from the finance team was reported: it had been explained at the Scrutiny Co-ordinating Group that members would not receive access but that DSPs would be consulted on their report requirements from the system. This had already taken place. At the

moment, the budget preparation was a higher priority than providing members with Cedar Access.

The group agreed not to support the request.

6. Any other business

The membership of the group was considered and it was agreed that no changes were required.

The next meeting would be 14th February 2007 2.00p.m., room to be arranged.

BVPI

Those indicators with a number in the PI column are from the Government's Best Value Performance Indicators suite used by many Councils. The remaining indicators are local to SKDC and may be relatively simple measures/indicators only. The reader is asked therefore to exercise an element of caution when interpreting any data attached to them.

IND Type = C - Cumulative/% - Percentage/ CA - Cumulative Average/N - Number/A - Average

Reporting = blank - Monthly/Q - Quarterly/Y - Yearly/H - Half yearly (Sept)

PI	SKDC Priority Area and PI Description	Lead Officer	IND Type	Reporting	2005/06 SKDC Outturn	2004/05 Upper Quartile	2006/2007 SKDC Target	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	Are We Improving Yr on Yr?	2007/2008 SKDC Targets	
ACCESS Priority A																		
SK20	No of visitors to the SKDC website	Andy Nix	C	Q	434,194	N/A	420,000			118,999				281,542			Y	450,000
SK21	% of 'application for service' transactions that are dealt with by the CSC - Grantham	Andy Nix	C		N/A	N/A	50%	n/a	22.60%	22.6%	28.7%	28.7%	28.7%	28.7%	32.3%	n/a	65%	
SK22	% of 'application for service' transactions that are dealt with by the CSC - Area Offices	Andy Nix	C		N/A	N/A	50%	n/a	3.10%	3.1%	3.1%	3.1%	8.7%	8.7%	16.90%	n/a	65%	
SK23	No of self service transaction (excludes Internet & Telephone Payments	Andy Nix	N	Q	N/A	N/A	1000			264				338			n/a	1200
SK24	% increase yr on yr in all self service transactions	Andy Nix/Revs Manager	%	Q	169.6%	N/A	10%			0%				60%			N	10%
COMMUNICATIONS Priority A																		
SK70	No. of copies of SK Today issued	Ellen Breur	C	Q	4	N/A	5			1				1			Y	5
SK71	No. of SKOOPS issued	Ellen Breur	C	Q	6	N/A	6		1					1			n/a	6
SK72	No of Residents that have received a copy of SKToday	Ellen Breur	N	Y	57%	N/A	67%							N/a			n/a	72%
SK73	No. of staff that feel well informed (measured through staff survey)	Ellen Breur	CA	Y	36%	N/A	50%							N/a			n/a	60%
SK74	% of PR outputs to media actually published	Ellen Breur	%		81.8%	N/A	82%	100%	100%	83%	90%	88%	88%	86%	82%	Y	84%	

2008/
2009
SKDC
Targets
460,000
80%
80%
1440
10%
5
6
77%
65%
85%

DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANELS (DSPs) WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7

INTRODUCTION

This Work Programme is partly derived from the Cabinet's Forward Plan, but also contains items that have been brought forward by the DSPs themselves.

Where the item has appeared on the Forward Plan, the anticipated date of the key decision is listed in the second column. The third column shows the last available date that the full DSP can consider this item before the key decision is due to be taken (unless a special meeting is called). This does NOT necessarily mean that the item will appear on the DSP agenda, this will only happen if this is requested by the Chairman or members of the DSP. There will also be instances where there is no DSP meeting before a decision is due to be taken; in these cases the next meeting date after the decision date is shown.

As Cabinet meets monthly and the DSPs meet bi-monthly it is not possible within the current timetable of meetings for the DSPs to consider every single Cabinet or Cabinet Member decision. Scrutiny members are therefore encouraged to read this Work Programme and bring forward items for consideration where they think that an item should be considered by the DSP.

DEVELOPMENT AND SCRUTINY PANELS (DSPs)
WORK PROGRAMME 2006/7

ENGAGEMENT DSP

<u>ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION</u>	<u>Date item appeared on Forward Plan</u>	<u>DATE OF KEY DECISION (IF APPROPRIATE)</u>	<u>DSP MEETING</u>
Members IT		N/a	Working Group is meeting
Access and Modernisation Group		N/a	Working Group is meeting
Equalities		N/a	To receive minutes of Multi Cultural Consultation Forum
Review of Generic Equality Scheme	14.07.06	February 2007	11.01.07
Monitoring of telephone calls - responses		Ongoing	Ongoing
Service Plans : Gateway Review 3	N/a	Jan/Feb 2007	11.01.07
Closure of post office card accounts	Dec 06	N/a	11.01.07
Review of Communications Strategy	Dec 06	Not before January 07	11.01.07
Revised strategy on Access and Engagement	Dec 06	February 07	11.01.07
Democratic Review – report back from working group	N/a	N/a	11.01.07
Role and Function of councillors in the 21 st Century	Dec 06	N/a	11.01.07 or 08.03.07