

**AGENDA ITEM**

**REPORT TO COUNCIL**

**7 MARCH 2012**

**REPORT OF THE  
LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

**MEMBERS POLICY SEMINAR PROGRAMME**

**SUMMARY**

This report provides Council with an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminars held in January and February 2012 which provided a focus on the proposed Residents Survey, an update on progress and plans of Tristar / Vela, post stock transfer, the current state of provision and opportunities of the Voluntary and Community Sector in the Borough and Olympic related events planned for 2012. Supporting material from the seminar programme can be found on the member pages of the intranet.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Council are recommended to:

1. Receive this report and note its contents

**BACKGROUND**

1. Members Policy Seminars are an important vehicle for both informing and consulting with Members on a variety of topics from Policy and Legislative changes, contributions to Government consultations, and providing an update on local service provision from partner organisations. They are particularly useful for those issues which are of importance to the Council or partners but are in the early stages of development, or those which will be of interest to Members, out with the usual reporting arrangements.
2. A programme of seminars is set annually with events planned on a monthly basis. Topics are reviewed monthly by the Corporate Management Team to ensure issues are current and discussions and information provision is timely. Special, additional seminars are arranged as required.
3. The Policy Seminar programme has been in place since January 2009 and was evaluated in January 2010. The evaluation showed that there was overall a positive response from members who felt that they provided an opportunity for in depth discussion on a wide range of topics. Feedback was received on the format, acoustics and some of the venue choices. Where possible these issues have been addressed in the current programme. A further review is scheduled for 2012.

**SUMMARY OF SEMINARS HELD SINCE LAST COUNCIL JANUARY 2012.**

4. There has been two Member Seminars since the last report to Full Council. The January seminar included two items:- an opportunity to receive an update on the proposal to commission a Residents Survey in the spring of 2012 and for members to input suggestions for questions or topic areas to be included. Suggestions were received and

discussion regarding boosting in areas or with certain communities was explored. Progress on the joint commissioning of the survey within the region is on schedule for delivery in the spring/ early summer 2012.

5. The second item was a presentation from Tristar Vela who provided an update on progress since the stock transfer in December 2010. The presentation covered progress made on the actions detailed in their offer document, future plans and current challenges including potential impact of new legislation on their business, such as the Welfare Reform bill. Neighbourhood plans will be published shortly by TriStar Vela for each ward and will be available on their website.
6. The February seminar included an update on the current position of the Voluntary and Community Sector with presentations from Catalyst who detailed the current "health " of the sector within the borough, the support and role of Catalyst and their achievements to date. The Head of Policy Improvement and Engagement presented an update on the National and Local picture with regard to the sector, how we have responded as a council, funding and investments updates and the wider support package for the sector.
7. Ruben Kench, the Head of Culture and Leisure gave members an update on the events programme linked to the opportunities arising from the summer Olympics. This highlighted key dates, school events, corporate events promoted by Tees Active, intergenerational activity, themed signature events linked to our regular annual events programme and promoted the Community Live site. Details of the opportunity to participate in the Personal Podium, which is using the Olympic Games to encourage residents and employees of the Council to set a personal goal, hopefully leading to a lifestyle change, were also provided.
8. All slides , agenda and supporting material from the seminars can be accessed at <http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>
9. A regular update report on members seminar events held will be provided to Council at each meeting going forward.

## **FINANCIAL AND LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

### **Financial**

11. There are no financial implications arising as a direct result of this report.

### **Legal**

12. There are no legal implications arising as a direct result from this report.

## **RISK ASSESSMENT**

13. This report is categorised as low to medium risk. Existing management systems and daily routine activities are sufficient to control and reduce risk.

## **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

14. This report is not subject to Equality Impact Assessment as it makes no proposals for service development or policy change.

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY IMPLICATIONS**

15. Members Policy Seminars help the Council achieve all its objectives as outlined in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

### **CONSULTATION INCLUDING WARD/COUNCILLORS**

16. No external consultation has taken place on this report.

Julie Danks  
Corporate director of Resources  
[Julie.danks@stockton.gov.uk](mailto:Julie.danks@stockton.gov.uk)  
Tel number 01642 527007

#### Background Papers

None

#### Ward(s) and Ward Councillors:

Members Policy Seminars affect all wards in the Borough.

#### Property

This report has no implications for the Council's Capital Programme and Asset Management Plan.