

MEMBERS POLICY SEMINAR PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

This report provides Council with an overview of content from the Members Policy Seminar held in May 2012 which gave an update on the emergency planning arrangements for the borough and the latest developments in relation to the children's centres. 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 July 2012.

SUMMARY OF THE SEMINAR HELD SINCE LAST COUNCIL MAY 2012

4. There has been one Member Seminars since the last report to Full Council. The May seminar included two items. The first item was led by the Cleveland Emergency Planning Unit who spoke to Members about the structure of the unit within Stockton-on-Tees and outlined the Council's and Members' roles in the emergency planning arrangements. The presentation outlined the remit of the emergency planning unit which covers the preparation of emergency plans, the provision of advice for officers and testing out plans to evaluate preparedness. Representatives from the unit asked if Members could complete a copy of a community risk register for their wards and to feed in any contact details they have of individuals who would like to be involved further with this work.

5. The second item was an update on the review of the children's centres. The presentation summarised the outcomes of the review and discussed the details of the procurement exercise which was undertaken to identify providers for a number of children's centres in the borough. A representative from the Big Life Company (one of the children's centres providers) attended the seminar to outline the key themes and priorities for the children's centres which they have assumed responsibility for. Following the presentation, Members had the opportunity to ask the provider questions about the management of the children's centres they have responsibility for.
6. All slides, agenda and supporting material from the seminars can be accessed at <http://kyit.stockton.gov.uk/members/policyupdatesessions>
7. 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.

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Background Papers
Slides/ Presentation from the member seminar programmes.

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.