

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	9 September, 2014
SUBJECT	Engagement with Members
PURPOSE	To report on recent discussions and further proposals on improving engagement with members
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1. A report was presented to the last meeting of this committee on recent discussions on improving engagement with members. Specifically, it was suggested that a group of councillors and officers be established to discuss this further and plan any further steps jointly.

2. In addition, at the beginning of July, a training / development session was held on the the role of councillors in a period of great change. The aim was to help councillors in their role of leading their communities over the difficult years we will be facing.

3. The group of councillors and officers met on 21st July and a very useful discussion was held, analysing what is good at the moment in terms of engagement with members and what needs to be improved. That lead to an agreement on a list of 11 areas for improvement, including strategic issues such as "Planning Change" and "Managing Expectations" and more operational matters such as "The Correct Contact Details" and "Social Media"

4. The plan now is for the group to re-convene, possibly during September, to agree on practical implementation to improve in the individual areas. This will lead to a work programme against which progress can be monitored. The proposed work programme will be presented to the next meeting of this committee.

5. There was a very warm reception for the training / development session at the beginning of July and a number of members expressed the view that it would be useful for other members to attend such a session in the future. We will review the demand for such a session and arrange a further session as necessary.