

Subject: Use by Members of Council
Facilities

Status: For publication

Report to: Standards Committee

Date: 8th March 2007

Report of: Head of Legal and Democratic Services

Portfolio

Holder: Councillor Michael Ormerod, Cabinet Member for Finance and Risk Management

Key Decision:

NO

Forward Plan
Relevant Box

General Exception

Special Urgency

"X" In

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To introduce a formal policy in respect of the use by members of Council facilities.

2. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

2.1 The matters discussed in this report are linked to and support the following corporate priorities:

- *Delivering quality services to customers (Customers, Improvement)*
- *Equipping Members to fulfil their role as leaders in the community (Community Network)*

3. RISK ASSESSMENT IMPLICATIONS

3.1 There are no specific risk issues for Members to consider arising from this report.

4. BACKGROUND AND OPTIONS

4.1 The use by elected Members of Council facilities and the provision of support to councillors is central to their ability to function effectively. A range of services is available to elected Members and these are listed in the Councillors Induction Pack. The production of a formal policy will provide guidance to Members and

officers on the extent of services provided and the restrictions imposed as a result of legislative requirements. A copy of the proposed policy is attached.

4.2 Councillors must only use Council facilities in their role as an elected Member strictly for that purpose and no other. Members must not use Council accommodation, its paper or computers for any personal, business-related or party political matter, unless it has agreed payment with the Head of Legal and Democratic Services. The Council is expressly prevented by legislation and a Publicity Code from publicising, or assisting others to issue publicity on behalf of Political Groups or organisations.

4.3 The following services to councillors are available:-

- An Induction Pack
- The production and drafting of letters
- Sending, receiving and distributing mail
- Sending and receiving facsimiles
- Arrangements for meetings with officers
- Room bookings and use of meeting rooms
- A range of Member development opportunities
- Arrangements for conferences and Member Development sessions and associated travel arrangements
- The Printing of business cards
- Stationery equipment and photocopying
- The Member Enquiry Service
- Arrangements for official Photographs and Identity Badges
- Setting up surgeries
- Use of Council ICT
- Provision of Members' Allowances claim forms
- Use of the Members' Library
- Personal Development Plans and advice

4.4 Access to these services is normally made by contacting the Member Support Assistant, based within the Democratic Services Section.

4.5 The Council also provides direct secretarial support to the Leader of the Council and the Mayor.

5. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF FINANCIAL SERVICES

5.1 There are no financial implications arising from the introduction of the policy.

6. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

6.1 The introduction of a policy on the use by Members of Council facilities will clarify rights and responsibilities in relation to services to councillors and strengthen the Council's ethical governance arrangements.

7. COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

7.1 There are no specific Human Resources implications arising from the introduction of the policy.

8. CONCLUSION

8.1 The policy sets out the rights and responsibilities of Elected Members in respect of use of Council facilities.

9. RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 To approve the introduction of a policy on the use by Members of Council facilities.

10. CONSULTATION CARRIED OUT

10.1 None

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Background Papers	
Document	Place of Inspection
Councillors Induction Pack	Room 217, Futures Park, Bacup