

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Standards Committee

DATE: 11th January, 2010

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WARD(S): All

PART I FOR DECISION

MEMBERS' PERFORMANCE MONITORING – ATTENDANCE RECORDS

1. Purpose of Report

To set out action agreed by the Committee at its last meeting regarding Members' attendance record and to submit proposals for submitting attendance reports for individual committees/sub-committees and panels.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

- 2.1 That the action now proposed in respect of future reporting on Members' attendance be approved and adopted with effect from the start of the new municipal year.

3. Community Strategy priorities

- 3.1 By putting in place the means for effectively monitoring Members' performance the Council will help ensure that governance of the highest order is maintained which will contribute to achieving the Council's community strategy priorities.

4. Other Implications

- (a) **Financial** – None.
- (b) **Risk Management** – There are no specific risks arising from this report.
- (c) **Human Rights Act and Other Implications** – None.
- (d) **Staffing Implications** – There may be some staffing implications in terms of increased workloads.

5. Background/Supporting Information

- 5.1 At the Committee's last meeting, during consideration of the Members' attendance records it was suggested that in addition to the current annual monitoring reports, each committee, sub-committee or panel should receive a report on the attendance of its Members during the current year. The rationale behind these additional reports was that Members who failed to attend meetings could be held to account by their peers. There was some discussion on how this suggestion

would work in practice and the Officers were asked to report back to the Committee with possible proposals.

- 5.2 As the purpose of the individual reports is to influence and change Members' behaviour it is suggested that rather than submitting reports at the end of the municipal year a rolling attendance report should be submitted to each meeting. This currently happens in respect of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and seems to work well. An example of how this report would look is attached as Appendix A.
- 5.3 In respect of the annual monitoring reports, as agreed by the Committee at its last meeting, Members who, during the year under review, have experienced exceptional circumstances which account for a significant number of absences will be invited to explain the reason for their attendance record and a footnote to that effect will be added to the Report. On practical grounds explanatory notes will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances as the reporting of reasons for individual absences would be impracticable.
- 5.4 As regards measures to improve Members' attendance at compulsory training sessions, the compulsory training for 2010/2011 has been incorporated into the Council's corporate meeting diary which is to be submitted to Council for approval on 26th January 2010. This will give Members advance warning of all training dates and hopefully outside bodies, particularly local ones, will have some regard to the calendar of meetings when fixing their meeting dates. All compulsory member training/development has recently been reviewed and will not be added to without the approval of the Council's Corporate Management Team. However, if any additional compulsory training sessions are subsequently added to the approved Calendar of Meetings, two alternative dates for the same training session will be offered in the expectation that Members will be able to attend one of them.

6. Background Papers

Minutes for Standards Committee meeting held on 7th October 2009.

7. Appendix

Appendix A -Suggested format for attendance reports