



Corporate Performance Panel
Wednesday, 21st July, 2021 at 4.30 pm
in the Assembly Room, Town Hall, Saturday Market
Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ

Reports marked to follow on the Agenda and/or Supplementary Documents

1. **Cabinet Report: Members Enquiries Inbox (Pages 2 - 5)**

Contact

Democratic Services
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King's Court
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King's Lynn
Norfolk
PE30 1EX
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Email: democratic.services@west-norfolk.gov.uk

Members Enquiries – Consultation Feedback – Comments

Members Responses

1. I've used the service once. Took a while to get an answer.
2. Yes, many times
3. I have ever actually used this service. Nothing has never come my way which I needed to ask for a councillor's reply. This is not to say it will never happen, it just hasn't happened so far.
4. Yes – carry on regardless, I like it
5. I think it's great
6. I'd like to comment those on planning, planning enforcement and CSNN for their prompt responses
7. I've never used this service
8. Love the Members Enquiries Inbox – please keep it
9. I'm opposed to this continuing as I feel it's presented barriers to my getting answers. I have had to wait on occasion and I don't always get the answers readily
10. I have found the availability of Members Enquiries very useful and would quite like it to continue to be available. The initial contact via the Members inbox is helpful as on occasions I am not sure who to contact so it's a useful filtering process and hopefully prevents mis-directed emails
11. I began as an opponent to the idea but have been won around but records need to be kept on times taken to respond.
12. Enquiries can frequently wander into the political arena
13. Could be useful to keep this option after the end of September for when there are uncertainties as to who is the best person to department to deal with the enquiry

APPENDIX A

Officer Responses

1. Frequently consulted by Members Enquiries for information
2. For Planning it just builds another step into the system. I often deal with Cllrs direct because of the nature of planning work
3. It's a really useful set up. Helps with filtering and repeat queries – and saves a lot of time for other officers. Also – it means that councillor queries are less likely to get buried in the other emails – and potentially there is a better response rate – you and your team's chasing probably means that the councillor get a better service/response rate.
4. I would prefer to continue using the co-ordinated members inbox rather than having to responding to enquiries by individual members on an ad hoc basis.
5. Works well, as long as I get to see all the questions being asked of the service area's I am responsible for.

Tracked changes to Member/Officer Protocol:

47 Officers will make every effort to give timely responses to Member's enquiries in accordance with the process and appropriate timescales set out in Paragraphs 105 - ~~111.08~~

Member Enquiries

104 It is acknowledged that there are a wide range and diversity, of enquiries that a Member may wish to pursue, this section offers guidance on the procedure relating most commonly received Member enquiries as follows.

105 Planning applications / planning enforcement: ~~enquires~~ should normally be directed in the first instance to the case officer who will normally reply by email or telephone within three working days. Should the matter be of a particularly sensitive or complex nature the enquiry should be directed to the relevant team leader or the planning control Manager. Members are encouraged to check the planning section of the Councils website prior to contacting officers when seeking information on live planning applications.

106 Matters (other than live planning/ planning enforcement cases) related to a ~~Councillors~~ Member's own Ward: ~~enquires~~ should normally be directed sent by email to the the relevant Executive Director or in his/her absence to the relevant service manager Member Enquiries Mailbox, which will be acknowledged within 2 working days and a response should be provided within 10 working days. ~~who will normally respond by email or telephone within three working days. In more complex cases an acknowledgement will be provided within three working days but a full response may take a longer period of time. If this is the case further time is required to provide a the response, the~~ Member will be given an estimate of the length of time necessary to prepare a full response ~~(which will not normally be greater than 10 working days)~~ together with a brief explanation of the reason that a longer timescale is required. Should the Member be unhappy with the explanation provided than this should be raised with ~~the relevant Service Manager/an~~ Executive Director. Where a matter is considered by the Member to be particularly urgent ~~officers will make every effort to deal with enquiry within one working day~~ and time is of the essence, Members should confirm this within their email to the Members Enquiries Mailbox.

107 Policy matters under active consideration by a Council body or any other matter directly relating to a report due to be considered by a Council body: ~~enquires~~ should be sent by email to the Member Enquiries Mailbox, which will be acknowledged within 1 working day and a response will aim to be provided before the relevant meeting. ~~enquiries should be directed to the author of the relevant report, and in his/her absence to the Chief Executive/Deputy Chief Executive who will normally respond within two working days.~~

108 ~~General enquiries/complaints~~ Complaints: ~~enquires~~ should be directed to the Democratic Service Manager, ~~or to~~ the Monitoring Officer or to the Chief Executive. ~~de~~ Depending on the nature and severity of the issue, a response will be provided within three working days but in more complex cases an acknowledgement will be provided together with an estimation of the time likely to be required to fully address the matter.

109 Portfolio/political issues - such enquires should be directed to the Council Leader/Deputy leader or the relevant portfolio leader.

Members' access to documents and information

110 This part of the protocol should be read in conjunction with the Access to Information Rules in the Council's constitution.

111 Members may request ~~senior officers to provide them with~~ such information, explanation and advice as they may reasonably need to assist them to discharge their roles as Members. This may range from general information about some aspect of the Council's services to specific information on behalf of a constituent. Requests should be sent by email to the Member Enquiries Mailbox, which will be acknowledged within 2 working days and a response should be provided within 10 working days. Where information is requested on behalf of a third party, it will only be provided if:

- it is in the public domain, and
- it is not barred by legislation from being given.