

Subject: Members' Web Pages – Review of Guidance
Date of Meeting: 17 November 2009
Report of: Director of Strategy & Governance
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Wards Affected: All

FOR GENERAL RELEASE

1. BACKGROUND:

- 1.1 At its meeting on 22 September, the Governance Committee considered a report of the then Acting Director of Strategy & Governance which contained a draft revised Members' Web Page Policy (see item 51ii on the agenda).
- 1.2 Unfortunately, the actual revised Web page Policy attached to the report was not circulated with the agenda and the Chairman suggested that the item be deferred to the next meeting and that the draft policy be circulated to all Members for comment and considered by the Leaders Group before coming back to the Committee. The Committee agreed with the suggestion and resolved accordingly.
- 1.3 The draft revised policy was circulated to Members and there was one response suggesting that the revised draft did not clarify the situation and was open to misinterpretation.
- 1.4 The Leaders Group discussed the revised draft and the Head of Law explained the legal and practical context and gave examples of how the policy would operate in practice, bearing in mind that section 2 of the Local Government Act 1986, as reflected in paragraph 9.1 of the Policy, was paramount and the policy does not allow anything that appears to be intended to affect public support for a political party. The revised policy simply allows references to political parties or personalities in a factual and none party political context.
- 1.5 The Leaders Group agreed the revised draft policy but asked that the position be monitored and a report brought back to the Governance Committee in six months time.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 2.1 That Members approve the revised Members Web Policy;
- 2.2 That the Committee requires all Members who have pages published on the Members' web pages to sign the revised Web Page Policy as a condition of continuing to use the web page facility and that Members wishing to join the site in the future be granted access to it on condition that they first sign a copy of the revised Members' Web Page Policy.

2.3 That the operation of the policy be monitored and a report comes back to the Committee in six month time.

3. CONSULTATION AND IMPLICATIONS

3.1 These are the same as per the original report attached as item 51(ii).