

Report to Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date of meeting: 13 December 2007

**Subject: Communications and Access to Information
Arrangements within EFDC – Request for Review by
Councillor Cooper**



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Committee Secretary: A Hendry, Ext 4246

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That a review of the use of ward Councillors forms be undertaken and reported back to the Panel;**
- (2) That consideration be given to including a session within the Members Training Programme about how issues are considered by the Councils Committee and where to go for information about services;**
- (3) That a hierarchy chart of the Council staff and structure be provided for members on completion of the Senior Management review;**
- (4) That officers be reminded of the desirability of reports from meetings not attended by Members appearing in the Council Bulletin as and when appropriate;**
- (5) That a 'new documents' shelf be created in the Members Room together with work to remove old and obsolete materials to enable faster location of documents;**
- (6) That consideration be given to including a summary box on committee reports;**
- (7) That future planning training sessions cover the main aspects of the various local and national plans and related current issues; and**
- (8) That consideration is given to strengthening the advice to potential Councillors about the need for attending new Councillor induction sessions following their election.**

Report:

1. At their last meeting the Constitution and Members Services Panel considered a request submitted by Councillor Mrs Cooper for scrutiny of communication and access to information arrangements. This request had been referred to the Panel by this Committee. The Panel considered each concern and agreed the actions outlined above as a response to the initial request for review.

2. The responses indicate a pragmatic approach to the issues raised. Recommendations (1) and (6) will require further reports to members. The other recommendations can be programmed and/or actioned as appropriate. No constitutional issues have been raised.

3. Full details of the discussion are contained within the notes of the Panel on 20 November 2007. The original request is attached for reference.