

**Classification:** Public

**Key Decision:** No

## **Gravesham Borough Council**

**Report to:** Overview Scrutiny Committee

**Date:** 01 April 2021

**Reporting officer:** Darren Everden, Assistant Director (IT & Transformation) and Michelle Batstone, Corporate Change Manager

**Subject:** Recent Member Survey – Responses

### **Purpose and summary of report:**

To provide the Overview Scrutiny Committee with the findings from the recent Member Survey, specifically in relation to technology and future Member requirements, for consideration.

### **Recommendations:**

Member are asked to review the findings sets out in this report and subsequent appendix and provide thoughts and/or comments for further consideration.

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In December 2020, a Member survey was undertaken. The main purpose of the survey was to explore the ways in which Members engage with their constituents in order to inform the council's submission to the Local Government Boundary Commission, relating to council size.
- 1.2 In addition, the survey also sought to identify the technological support that is currently in place for Members, any areas of concern and any areas where further support is required by Members. The purpose of this report is to provide Members with an overview of the areas identified by Members for further review, and the approach the council is taking to address this.
- 1.3 In total 25 Members responded to the survey, a response rate of 58.14%.

## **2. Member Survey Findings**

- 2.1 Specifically in relation to technology, there were a number of areas of concern/consideration raised by Members through the survey covering the following areas:
  - 2.1.1 The rollout of Microsoft 365 and associated training for Members to support them in the use of the new software.

- 2.1.2 Improvements to hardware provided to Members – consideration of changes to the actual devices used by Members along with additional hardware, such as monitors, to support Members in their activities.
  - 2.1.3 E-mails – concerns regarding the reliability of the e-mail server and the potential for re-directing e-mails if possible.
  - 2.1.4 Additional training for Members to support the use of virtual meetings to engage with constituents.
  - 2.1.5 Training for Members on the safe use of social media. This would include exploring options with Members to enable them to undertake surveys with their constituents through social media and other mechanisms as required.
  - 2.1.6 Consideration of a specific case management system to enable Members to manage their constituency casework.
  - 2.1.7 Undertaking a review of the council's website to ensure it is user friendly and easy to navigate.
- 2.2 Appendix two provides a detailed response from officers regarding each of the areas raised, along with identification of specific actions where necessary.

### **3. Background papers**

- 3.1 Background papers pertaining to this report are held by the Corporate Change Manager. Anyone wishing to inspect background papers should, in the first place, be directed to Committee & Electoral Services who will make the necessary arrangements.

IMPLICATIONS	APPENDIX 1
<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications resulting from this report.
<b>Finance and Value for Money</b>	There are no finance or value for money implications resulting from this report.
<b>Risk Assessment</b>	There is a need to ensure that members are able to engage with their constituents effectively. The risk for Members is, that without the appropriate technology and training in place to support their roles, they will not be able to effectively represent and respond to their constituents.
<b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b>	<i>A data protection impact assessment (DPIA) should be carried out at the start of any major project involving the use of personal data or if you are making a significant change to an existing process.</i>
	<p>a. Does the project/change being recommended through this paper involve the processing of <a href="#">personal data</a> or <a href="#">special category data</a> or <a href="#">criminal offence data</a>?</p> <p>Whilst there are no specific data protection or GDPR consideration directly linked to this report, data security will be considered as part of any new systems, technology or processes that are implemented for Members use, particularly in relation to the use of constituent data.</p>
	<p>b. If yes to question a, have you completed and attached a DPIA including Data Protection Officer advice?</p> <p>N/A</p>
<b>Equality Impact Assessment</b>	<p>a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p>No</p>
	<p>b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality? If yes, please explain answer.</p> <p>No</p>
	<i>In submitting this report, the Chief Officer doing so is confirming that they have given due regard to the equality impacts of the decision being considered, as noted in the table above</i>
<b>Corporate Plan</b>	Supporting Members' in their constituency role, whilst not a specific corporate objective, is critical in ensuring the council and its Members are able to effectively engage with the residents in the borough.
<b>Climate Change</b>	The ability for Members to undertake their duties remotely, either through attending virtual council meetings or by engaging with their constituents virtually, will have a positive impact on Climate Change through the reduced use of paper and reduced travel mile.

<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>		<b>APPENDIX 1</b>
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	There are no crime and disorder implications resulting from this report.	
<b>Digital and website implications</b>	The survey responses from Members identified a concern regarding the council's website. This has been addressed in the appendix to the report.	
<b>Safeguarding children and vulnerable adults</b>	There are no safeguarding children and vulnerable adult's implications resulting from this report.	