

COPY OF AGENDA ITEM No. 6

Council - 9th October, 2002

SUBJECT :

Establishment of Liaison Meetings with Opposition Spokespersons

Recommendation(s) :

At its meeting held on the 30th September, 2002 , the Executive Board recommended to Council the following proposed arrangements for liaison meetings with opposition spokespersons as set out in the attached report .

Reasons for recommendation(s) : To enable the County Council to put in place suitable arrangements for briefing opposition spokespersons further to the decision taken at its meeting on 10th July 2002

Local Government Act 1972 – Access to Information

Background Papers used in the preparation of this report:

None identified

1. POLICY / LEGAL IMPLICATIONS :

There are no specific policy or legal implications relating to the proposal..

NL/LT

2.RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS :**2.1 FINANCIAL :**

There are marginal cost implications as regard subsistence and travelling expenses are concerned in respect of members` attendance at meetings.

RJ

2.2 HUMAN RESOURCES :

There are none

G.E.

2.3 PHYSICAL ASSETS :

There are none. **MPJ**

3. CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN :
3.1 LOCAL MEMBER (s) : Such consultations are not appropriate in this instance.
3.2 COMMUNITY / TOWN COUNCIL : Such consultations are not appropriate in this instance.
3.3 RELEVANT PARTNERS : Such consultations are not appropriate in this instance.
3.4 STAFF SIDE REPS. & OTHER ORGANISATIONS: Such consultations are not appropriate in this instance.

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File Reference	AD021

COUNTY COUNCIL 9TH OCTOBER 2002
LIAISON ARRANGEMENTS WITH OPPOSITION
SPOKESPERSONS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY : On 10th July the County Council approved a report on the recommendation of Executive Board about the establishment of a shadow executive board as a formal means for the Chief Executive and the Directors to meet with the opposition group on current matters, for the purpose of briefing/consultation. The County Council asked however that that terms of reference be drawn up and endorsed by Council before the any arrangement is introduced

The Executive Board have given further consideration to the matter and are of the view that irrespective of the political balance of the current or any future administration, there is merit in a system which recognizes the position of opposition spokespersons but without the formality that attends on the establishment of a formal "shadow" arrangement.

Consequently, the Board requested that the Chief Executive prepare guidelines in respect of convening of meetings, drawing up the agenda and the structure of meetings and the following are recommended for adoption.

- that monthly Liaison Meetings with Opposition Spokespersons be scheduled into the Council diary for the purpose of briefing the opposition group on current matters .
- the Leader of the Opposition Group will identify the spokespersons to the Chief Executive and only those members may attend meetings. The number of spokespersons including the Leader and Deputy Leader of the opposition group is not to exceed the number of members on the council`s executive. No substitutions will be allowed. The meetings will not function as another scrutiny committee.
- an agenda for each meeting will be drawn up by the Chief Executive or his nominated representative, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Leader of the Opposition.
- the agenda will include topical items on which the Executive Board is to receive/ or has received reports. The Chief Executive, Directors or Heads of Service on certain occasions would present factual reports and be able to provide background information.(Clearly officers would not be in a position to explain why the Executive Board had taken a particular course of action, as this would quite properly be a matter for the Leader or other Executive Board member.)
- a brief record of the matters discussed at the Liaison Meetings will be maintained by an officer nominated by the Chief Executive and be available for inspection by other members.
- these arrangements will replace all other briefing meetings between the Chief Executive, Directors, Heads of Service and

all other senior officers in regard to provision of information to the principal opposition group and there will be no other additional meetings for this purpose.

- attendance at the Liaison Meetings will be considered to be an approved duty for the payment of expenses.
- The Chief Executive will draw up guidelines for officers in respect of the operation of these arrangements .

Detailed explanatory report also attached

YES / NO