

## Action Plan for the implementation of the Communications Task and Finish Forum's Recommendations

<b>Number:</b>	<b>Recommendation:</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>	<b>Cost implications:</b>	<b>Priority</b>	<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
1.	That Councillors who are not members of committees be sent the electronic link to agendas and reports on the Council's web site.	CP	Saving	Principle adopted	May 06	Ongoing
2.	All councillors who wish to receive a hard copy of the Executive Board agenda should be sent one	RP	Already within the budget	1	June 06	Ongoing
3.	That every effort be made to enable all Councillors to benefit from the e-members project and have access to the internet, email facilities and computer training.	CP	Already within the budget	Principle adopted. Reminder about computer training issued	May 06	Ongoing
4.	That Councillors be kept up-to-date, particularly in respect of relevant major issues within their wards and official visits to their wards.	RP legal issues MW official issues	Staff time	1	June 06	Ongoing
5.	That acknowledgement of Councillors' emails, faxes, letters and planning comments becomes standard practice and response times included within the Customer Service standards.	DL/KH	Staff time	Standards for responding to emails, faxes and letters are included in the recently	May 06	March 07

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				approved Customer Service Strategy and standards for responding to planning comments are in hand		
6.	That consideration be given to web casting certain Council meetings.	DL	We will investigate the costs and other implications of introducing webcasting for certain Council meetings by October 2006	2	May 06	October 06
7.	That newly appointed Chairmen and Vice Chairmen undergo relevant training. (Note: The only change in Chairmanship of Committees following the annual meeting was Councillor Moulding, Portfolio Holder Resources who became Chairman of Interviewing (CDs) and Employment appeals. Councillor Moulding is an experience Chairman and no additional training was required. Three less experienced Chairmen/Vice Chairmen attended a Chairmanship Course in June 06.)	DV	Training costs (£149 x 3)	1	Following annual meeting of Council	End July 06

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8.	That Member welcome days be of half a day duration with relevant specific issues being introduced at the start of each meeting.	DV	No cost implication	1	Following local elections in May 2007	December 07
9.	That use of jargon and acronyms be reduced and properly explained.	DV	No cost implication	1	Immediate	Ongoing
10.	That ways of raising Members' awareness of the Communications Calendar, the role of the Communications Officer, the Council's Corporate Priorities and the Plain English Standard be investigated.	NS/KJ	No cost implication	2	August 06	March 07
11.	That measures are taken to improve the standard of voicemail messages and return calls to achieve a consistent, good practice approach	DL	No cost implication	1	Will monitor and report to SMT in September 2006	
12.	That on major issues where there is consensus across the Council, comments from the non-majority groups should be included in the press release if possible.	NS	No cost implication	Principle adopted		
13.	That all Members commenting to the media direct on major issues should inform the Communications Officer.	NS	No cost implication	Link to action no 10 via The Knowledge	August 06	March 07

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14.	Various suggestions were made regarding the complaints procedure and leaflet which have been incorporated into the new procedure and revised 'Help us improve our services' leaflet.	DM	Procedure and leaflet duly amended	Completed		
15.	That the Portfolio Holder and the Committee Chairman (if relevant, for example Licensing or Development Control) may be told about any complaints at stage two. Relevant Ward Members to be given brief details with the option of asking for more information if wanted (subject to the complainant not objecting to this). (Note: Complaints will not be passed to chairmen of regulatory committees where they may have a role in determining a related application or matter in the future. However, they will be advised after a complaint has been resolved or dealt with of any general learning point or change in process which has resulted from a complaint without being given specific details.)	DM	Staff time	Completed		
16	That the automatic acknowledgement letter sent at stage two should incorporate a sentence saying that relevant Ward Members would be advised of the complaint unless they had any objections.	DM	No cost implication	Completed		
17.	That a progress report be sent if a full response could not be made within 3 weeks.	DM	Existing practice	Completed		

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18.	That Members be encouraged to check their facts with Officers before personally replying to complaints.	DV/DM	Occasional note to all members from the complaints officer	2	June 06	Ongoing
19.	That following the original complaint the complainant be advised of the action taken to address the cause of the complaint.	DM	Existing practice	Completed		
20.	That the use of Parish Magazines be investigated as a medium for positive publicity.	NS/DV	Audit of parish magazines	1	May 06	September 06
21.	That Member Services Officers be promoted as a first point of contact for Town and Parish Councils.	RP	Staff time	In place	May 06	Ongoing
22.	That the Taff supports the principle of making computers no longer required by the Council available to Town and Parish Councils.	CP	Already within the budget	1	February 06	September 06
23.	That the TaFF supports the principle of the ICT team giving computer demonstrations during the Annual Town and Parish Council meetings with EDDC in March 2006.	CP	Staff time	Completed		
24.	That Clyst Hydon Parish Council be recommended to contact the DAPC regarding the possibility of setting up additional Parish Council groups elsewhere in the district.	DL	No cost implications	Completed - a letter was sent to all Parish and Town Councils following the annual		

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				meetings in March		
25.	That ICT Services look into setting up a link from the Council's web site to a Town and Parish Council page.	CP	Staff time	2	June 06	March 07
26.	That Members ensure that they check their pigeon holes whenever they are at Knowle	DV	Occasional advice in The Knowledge and/or by the Chairman at Council meetings. Already being actioned.	3	July 05	Ongoing
27.	That Members be reminded to pass their apologies onto Member Services whenever they are unable to attend a meeting, especially a meeting of the full Council, to enable post to be sent/withheld as appropriate.	DV	Occasional advice in The Knowledge and/or email reminder	3	June 06	Ongoing
28.	That Xerox be instructed to change the day on which post is sent to Councillors from Mondays to Fridays.	CP	No cost implications	Completed		
29.	That no post is to be sent out to Members on the night of a full Council Meeting unless their apologies have been given.	DV/CP	Potential saving	1	June 06	Ongoing
30.	That the permanent projection equipment be installed for use during Council meetings, for example to regularly display the Council's priorities.	CP	Estimated cost £1,500	2	August 06	Ongoing

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31.	That Council agendas and reports include information on which priorities any particular item meets.	DL	Staff time	1	Being piloted June - December 2006	
32.	That more in-house ICT training be provided for Members, to include training on the 'Planning Online' system.	CP	Staff time	Offer of computer training stands	Awareness of 'Planning Online' is planned for September 2006	Ongoing
33.	That the Leaders of all the political groups be advised that it is expected of them to provide a mentor for any new Member regardless of their political persuasion.	DL	No cost implications	1	August 06	August 06
34.	That the TaFF supports the funding and appointment of an Assistant Communications Officer.	DL	Special item bid	Completed	February 06	Officer started work on 12 June
35.	That all Services be reminded to advise the Communications Officer of any events/stories coming up which could be of media interest.	NS	Staff time	1	June 06	October 06
36.	That Officers be asked to advise the Communications Officer of any good news/human interest stories which arise to allow the 'human face' of the Council to be publicised more.	NS	Staff time	1	June 06	October 06

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37.	That the Council consider advising the media in advance of significant cases being taken to court.	NS	Staff time	1	June 06	October 06
38.	That Ward Members be made aware of any press releases/statements issued concerning their ward.	NS	Staff time	Principle adopted		
39.	That the Communications Officer update a weekly 'What's on at EDDC' list for the website.	NS	Staff time	2	August 06	March 07
40.	That a strap line, for example 'Another service from EDDC' be added onto the livery of EDDC vehicles, equipment and street furniture.	NS	Costings needed	2/3	Report to SMT in Sept 06	
41.	That the Chief Executive/Leader records a monthly message to residents.	MW	Webcasting costs and implications to be investigated - see 6	2	May 06	October 06
42.	That the East Devon District Council logo be included on the front cover of the 'Working together for you' publication.	NS	No cost implications	1	January 07	March 07
43.	That if possible when East Devon Talk is included within Devon Talk it does not split a centre page spread.	NS	No cost implications	Principle adopted		
44.	That the Portfolio Holder – Communications be consulted on publications to be despatched to every household.	NS	No cost implications	Principle adopted		
45.	That Officers review how the Communications budget (including service budgets) is spent.	DL	Staff time	1	May 06	March 07

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46.	That an annual communications audit is carried out to test external opinion and get honest feedback on the communication services we provide.	NS	Staff time	3	March 07	October 07
47.	That the Council publishes an A-Z of services as an updated version of the 2005 Residents' Handbook.	NS	Staff time	Principle adopted	July 06	September 06
48.	That volunteer Communications Champions be appointed for each Service.	NS	Staff time	Principle adopted	May 06	October 06
49.	That work be carried out to raise Members and Officers' awareness of the Corporate Communications Calendar.	NS	Occasional advice in The Knowledge	2	August 06	March 07
50.	That consideration be given to more widespread use of 'back to the floor' days.	KJ	Staff time	1	July 06	
51.	That managers be encouraged to attend team meetings in their own areas.	KJ	Staff time	1	July 06	
<b>In addition, further recommendations were agreed by a Communications Think Tank on 23 July when considering the ideas of Parish and Town Councils on improving communications at the annual meetings held last March.</b>						
52.	That a credit card concertina list of Council contacts be distributed to all households in December when changes to Refuse and Recycling collections dates are announced. (This to include the Council's email address and the Customer Service Centre number if we are at the stage of publishing it by then.)	BD	£1,425 plus contribution to postage costs	1	June 2006	December 2006

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53.	That a monthly news sheet for district councillors to use to prompt information sharing at parish and town council meetings be explored	BD	Staff time To be piloted in the new year if feasible with a view to rolling out after the May 2007 election	2	September 2006	June 2007
54.	That a contact list of officers' job titles and telephone numbers be issued to parish and town councils	BD	Staff time	2	August 2006	September 2006
55.	That a Glossary of Terms be issued to parish and town councils	BD	Staff time	2	July 2006	August 2006