

SUBJECT:	Modern Councillor and Supporting the Democratic Process		
REPORT OF:	Officer Management Team-	Director of Resources	
	Prepared by	-	Democratic & Electoral Services Manager

1. Purpose of Report

To provide feedback on the work carried out by the Task and Finish Group set up to consider ways of supporting the modern councillor and the democratic process.

2. Links to Council Policy Objectives

Aim 5 - Cohesive and strong communities – strong, confident and active communities
Support individual Councillor engagement with their communities.

3. Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 3 February 2014 agreed to set up a Task and Finish Group to consider how the Council could best support the role of the “modern” councillor following the 2015 district elections bearing in mind the proposed reduction in the number of councillors, and shared service arrangements with CDC to ensure that Councillors have the tools they require to be effective community, corporate and partnership leaders. The following Councillors volunteered to work on the Task and Finish Group:

Councillors Chhokar, Griffin Kelly, Reed, Pope, The Earl of Stockton, Sullivan and Wallis.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its last meeting was advised that the Task and Finish Group had agreed a draft Induction Programme with an indicative timetable for events immediately following the District elections including a Market Day and briefing sessions on a variety of issues. This draft was further updated at the meeting of the Task and Finish Group on 15 September and a copy is attached. It will be noted that a few details still need to be finalised e.g. dates for training sessions.

A proposal to provide members with a Survival/Resource Pack to include key telephone contact numbers and details of Officers roles and responsibilities (with photographs) was also agreed by the Task and Finish Group and work to produce this is underway.

The Task and Finish Group also received feedback on the questionnaire that had been circulated at the Council meeting on 29 July 2014. With a response rate of 63% (26 questionnaires) a number of very useful comments/suggestions were made as set out in the analysis in appendix B. The Task and Finish Group noted the concerns around IT generally, particularly the extranet site and the Director of Resources has undertaken to identify solutions to enable simpler access.

4. Resources, Risk and Other Implications

Costs will be incurred in producing a Member Survival pack, but these will be absorbed within existing budgets.

5. Recommendation(s)

The Committee are asked to note the report.

Officer Contact:	Kulvinder Tumber - Democratic & Electoral Services Manager
Background Papers:	None