

COUNCIL BUSINESS COMMITTEE

Special Council Meeting 2014 26 June 2014

Report of Chief Officer (Governance)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To agree the format and arrangements for the special Council meeting on 24 September 2014

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That members discuss the format and content for the special Council meeting to enable officers to arrange the event.

1.0 Introduction

At the meeting on 16 January 2014, this Committee resolved:

“That Special Council meetings be maintained on a biennial basis, with the topic for the September 2014 meeting being to provide information for perspective candidates for the 2015 City Council elections.”

The Committee envisaged that this would be similar to the “Would you like to be a Councillor” Special Council meeting held in October 2010 and the programme for that event is appended for Members’ consideration.

2.0 The Event: Timing, speakers, publicity

It is recommended that the event take place in the evening so that individuals who work during the daytime are not excluded from attending. Democratic Services would ask the Group Leaders if they would be willing to speak for 5 or 10 minutes at the meeting about their work as a Councillor, perhaps covering why they first became interested in standing for election and giving a flavour of the Ward and Committee work that they have been involved in. It would be useful if a couple Councillors who were fairly new to the Council would agree to speak too, to give their perspective.

The venue would be Morecambe Town Hall in the Council Chamber. This was the venue last time and was useful to allow those interested in standing to see the format of the room for full council meetings.

The Chief Executive, Democratic Services Manager and Elections Manager would deliver short presentations and be available to respond to questions, as they did in 2010.

Refreshments were offered in 2010, to allow prospective candidates to meet and chat and to provide something to eat for those who had come straight from work. This is something that could be offered again with the costs being met by existing Democratic Services budgets.

In 2010, Political Groups were asked to publicise this event through their own group channels to any prospective candidates. Democratic Services would again liaise with communications officers to discuss how best to publicise the event to the general public. The Council put out a press release in 2010 which was picked up by local papers and generated some interest.

3.0 Content

The content of the meeting would cover:-

- Being a Councillor – what will be expected of you.
- Structure of the Council and decision making.
- Support that is available to Councillors from the Council (IT equipment, training, Democratic Support service, role of officers, etc.)
- Talks from Councillors to give their insights into the role of an Elected Member on Lancaster City Council.
- Informal participative session in several small groups round the tables - a mix of councillors and prospective candidates to ask questions and discuss. Democratic Services staff could pre-draft some questions to start these sessions and/or facilitate each table.
- Election procedures and the timescales for the May election.

Written information will be available for prospective candidates to take away with them.

4.0 Conclusion

This report is in line with the Committee's responsibility to agree the agenda and make arrangements for the annual special Council meeting, as set out in Part 3, Section 11 of the Council's Constitution. The Committee is invited to comment and contribute to the planning at this stage and confirm the arrangements to enable officers to organise the event.

CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT

(including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)

None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

All financial expenditure will be contained within existing budgets. It is estimated refreshments for the event will be approximately £100 if sandwiches are provided.

SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Section 151 Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Monitoring Officer has been consulted and has no further comments.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Ref:

Programme from 2010 Event

Teas and coffees will be available from 5.45pm

- Welcome
- Making a Difference by being a Councillor – Mark Cullinan, Chief Executive
- Introduction to the Council and the Governance Service – Sarah Taylor, Head of Governance
- Democratic Services and Member Development – Debbie Chambers, Democratic Services Manager
- Sandwiches and networking opportunity
- Councillors Experiences :

Paul Woodruff (Free Independent Group)
Jon Barry (Green Group)
Janie Kirkman (Liberal Democrat Group)
Susan Bray (Conservative Group)
Janice Hanson (Labour Group)
David Kerr (Independent Group)

Will speak about their roles and experiences being a District Councillor
- Election Procedures – Daphne Snelson, Elections Manager
- Special Council meeting resolution
- “You’ve just been Elected – now what?” DVD
- Close