

Leaders' Committee

Papers for Committee Meetings

Item no: 17

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Date: 4 June 2019
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Summary

Leaders' Committee is asked to consider whether London Councils should discontinue the practice of sending printed copies of committee papers to members of London Councils committees as a standard practice. Should this be agreed, it would be down to members to decide whether they wish to print the papers within their own authority – via the link to the published papers on the *London Councils* website sent to all members as now or access the PDF version on-line using their own laptop, tablet or smartphone device across the London Councils Members Wi-Fi service.

As a contingency, during the year 2019/20, it is proposed that a hard copy printed set of papers will be dispatched if requested by individual members.

Recommendations

Leaders' Committee to:

Consider whether to agree that London Councils discontinues sending printed committee papers;

if agreed, this to take effect post the respective committee AGM's.

Papers Committee Meetings

Background

1. In 2015, the Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order was passed which amended the 1972 Local Government Act and provided for meeting papers, where a member has given consent, to be sent electronically.

Current Position

2. London Councils currently produces and despatches hard copy papers for all of its committee meetings in line with the requirements of the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government Access to Information Act 1985 to all members unless, they have indicated otherwise.

Proposal

3. It is proposed that London Councils stops printing hard copies of meeting papers for its Committee meetings post the respective committee AGM's.

This is to include:

- Leaders Committee and its Executive Committee;
 - Transport and Environment Committee and its Executive Committee;
 - Grants Committee and its Executive Committee;
 - Capital Ambition Board;
 - Audit committee;
 - Greater London Provincial Council; and
 - Greater London Employers Forum.¹
4. A major benefit of such a proposition would be the reduction of the organisation's carbon footprint. Paper and stationery usage is reduced, less energy is used to produce printed papers, less printing equipment is required and less transport is involved.

¹ Papers are not printed for Young People's Education & Skills (YPES) and Congress of Leaders and Congress Executive

5. It is also proposed that if Leaders' Committee agrees to this proposal, that this decision acts as authority for London Councils not to produce papers for any of its committees and that the need for individual member consent to this change is waived². Clearly, of course, papers will still be sent electronically via an email with the link to the website and this would allow members to have the papers printed locally should they wish.
6. In addition, it is proposed that individual committee members should still be able to request from the relevant committee administrator a hard copy set of papers if a printed version is required and it is not possible for them to be printed locally. It is proposed to review demand for this contingency in the summer of 2020.
7. Through the London Councils website and a web-enabled laptop or tablet, members will be able to access meeting papers from any place, at any time to suit personal commitments. All portable laptops, tablets and smartphones come web and Wi-Fi enabled, so there is the convenience of being able to use familiar devices.
8. The London Councils website retains previous papers and can be accessed and referred to at any time (including during meetings), improving access to information.

Recommendations:

Leaders' Committee to:

- Consider whether to agree that London Councils discontinues sending printed committee papers;
- if agreed, this to take effect post the respective committee AGM's.

Financial Implications for London Councils

There will be savings for London Councils resulting from a reduction in paper, printing and postage, if Leaders' Committee decides that hard copies of committee papers are no longer produced.

² The Local Government (Electronic Communications) (England) Order 2015 permits delivery of an electronic summons to Members for a Committee meeting subject to the consent of the Member.

Legal Implications for London Councils

These are covered in the body of this report.

The security settings within the London Councils website allow for all common types of information to be published securely, safeguarding sensitive documents and applying where necessary the exemption criteria relevant to Access to Information legislation.

Equalities implications for London Councils

London Councils will continue to ensure accessibility to committee papers.