



Report to Cabinet

Subject: “Contacts” Editorial Board

Date: 1 September 2011

Author: Head of Strategy and Performance

In 2008 a cross-party member group was set up to oversee the development and production of the Council’s magazine, “Contacts”.

This Editorial Board met during the production of each edition of the magazine to discuss the content, set a broad direction for the magazine and support officers with its development.

Following the election in May, consideration has been given to continuation of the Board and whether its role should change. The view is that there remains a continuing role for the Board, but with a slightly revised role and with slightly amended membership.

Suggested terms of reference have been drawn up and are attached at **Appendix A**. These are substantially based on those in place previously – the main change is that the Board’s membership should explicitly include the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Communications, and that the Portfolio Holder will chair the meetings. There is a desire to make the magazine more community focused and the Editorial Board will assist in achieving this.

Members are aware and fully understand that the magazine must continue to comply with the Code on Local Authority Publicity and be non party-political.

If the proposal is supported, the intention is that the arrangement would begin with the next edition of Contacts, due for publication in late Autumn – therefore nominations from groups would be sought to allow the group to begin its work in early September. Arrangements would be reviewed for their effectiveness and value-added after one year.

Members’ instructions are requested.

Appendix A

Suggested Terms of Reference

Editorial Board - Contacts Magazine

The purpose of the Editorial Board is to give elected members the opportunity to:-

- Suggest items of interest for inclusion in the Magazine;
- Comment on the appearance and presentation of the magazine prior to publication;
- Monitor any feedback from the general public and to provide a platform for items of genuine local interest;
- Ensure that GBC success stories are celebrated as widely as possible within the community.
- Assist in developing more community news and views within the magazine

The Editorial Board is responsible for:-

- Advising on the content of the Magazine.
- Ensuring that the Magazine remains non-political;
- Ensuring that the Magazine provides an equitable and balanced representation across the Borough.

The composition of the Editorial Board is:-

- Portfolio Holder for Communications (Chair)
- 2 Labour Members
- 1 Conservative Member
- 1 Liberal Democrat Member

- 2 Officers to act as advisors to the Editorial Board (currently Head of Strategy and Performance and Communications Manager)

The Editorial Board has no direct responsibility for the publication or distribution of the magazine – these matters are the responsibility of the Communications Manager. Final content will continue to be decided by the Leader of the Council.