

MEETING	Democratic Services Committee
DATE	29 November 2016
SUBJECT	The Development of “Modgov” within the Council
PURPOSE	To update members on the most recent work and invite views on other matters for attention
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CEFNDIR

1. The Council has been using the “Modern.gov” software to support work in the democratic field for over a year now. This has involved the preparation and distribution of agenda, reports and minutes and their publication on the Councils Website.
2. As explained previously to this committee, this involved a great deal of hard work for the professional staff working in this field and the co-operation of officers in the Web Team and the Information Technology Unit. I want to note publicly my thanks to them for their willing and effective work in its introduction.

THE USE MADE OF IT

3. The main issues of it that members see is the “app” that is available for use on members’ tablets for them to receive the relevant committee agenda. There are several advantages to this “app”. Firstly, once a member has subscribed to receive an agenda, it comes onto the member’s tablet automatically without needing to be downloaded. Secondly, it enables a far more convenient way of navigation around the agenda than the more general software and also making notes and marking papers when a members wishes to note a specific point to be raised at a meeting.
4. By now, 40 of the 75 members receive their agenda in this way and, on the basis of the feedback, they appreciate it very much. Clearly, we will be concentrating now on preparations for the next election hoping that we will be able to address one problem, since we will be able to load the software for all members prior to them receiving their equipment.
5. The main public use for Modgov now is the part of the Website that deals with “The Council” and all the democracy related content that appears under that heading. That facilitates the process of loading content onto the Website and also means that we can publish more information about individual members, including their attendance levels.
6. Following observation from members, we have made some adaptations over recent months and it now means that the attendance details now include attendance at preparatory meetings, scrutiny investigations and area forums.

THE NEXT STEPS

7. Having invested in the system and accepting that it has already proved its value, we are now looking at how we are going to develop for the future. Clearly, with such systems, there are several elements that could be developed and we would like to receive observations from members on elements that they would wish to see developed in the future.
8. We are already looking at using Modgov to facilitate the publication of the 2017 election results and are looking currently at extending its use to meetings that are not public in order to use the “app” to send the papers to the members. Others matter receiving attention are including training information in the attendance details, seeking to integrate the agenda system with members’ Outlook diaries and improving our use of the forward planning and reminder facility within Modgov to improve our ability to remind officers of report timetables and track items.
9. Members’ observations are invited on the sorts of developments that should be given priority over the next period.