

FALKIRK COUNCIL

Subject: MEMBERSHIP OF THE IMPROVEMENT SERVICE
Meeting: FALKIRK COUNCIL
Date: 8 OCTOBER 2008
Author: ACTING DIRECTOR OF LAW & ADMINISTRATION

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Council of (i) an invitation by the Improvement Service to all Scottish Councils to become members of the organisation, and (ii) to ask Members to consider this invitation.

2. PURPOSE OF THE IMPROVEMENT SERVICE

- 2.1 The Improvement Service was set up to support improvement in the efficiency, quality and accountability of public services in Scotland through the provision of advice and consultancy, project management and support for learning and sharing of knowledge. It is governed by a Board and established as a partnership between COSLA and SOLACE and is a company limited by guarantee.
- 2.2 It aims to support continuous improvement by building on the expertise within local authorities and working in partnership with stakeholders in the public, private and voluntary sectors. It also provides advice and support in best value, efficient government and performance management, elected members' development, knowledge management, capacity building and management development, partnership and joint working, shared services and the Customer First programme.
- 2.3 The core objectives of the Improvement Service are to:-
- Promote a learning culture and support collaborative working across local authorities and their partners;
 - Build capacity within local government to improve the skills of officers and elected members;
 - Promote good practice across Scottish local government;
 - Promote the use of knowledge management within local authorities to support sharing and learning, e-governance and business re-design; and
 - Identify good practice and learning from outside Scotland and other areas of the public, private and voluntary sector to share with Scottish local government

3. INVITATION OF MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1 At the COSLA Convention in June 2008, at the request of the Improvement Service Board, it was agreed that all Councils be invited, and encouraged, to become members of the Improvement Service.
- 3.2 Previously, Local Government membership of the Improvement Service has been restricted to COSLA and SOLACE. The Board has altered the membership arrangements of the company to allow all individual Councils to become members.
- 3.3 There is no cost or liability associated with becoming a member, and membership would allow Councils to:-
- Approve the membership of the Improvement Service Board
 - Attend Annual General Meetings and call Extraordinary General Meetings
 - Input to the Business Plan of the Improvement Service

4. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Council considers whether to become a member of the Improvement Service.

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Acting Director of Law & Administration

Date: 25 August 2008

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

NIL