

Committee(s):	Date(s):
Culture, Heritage and Libraries	26 January 2015
Subject: Member Survey Results – City of London Pocketbook	Public
Report of: Town Clerk	For Decision

Summary

At its meeting on 27 October 2014, the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee received a report of the Town Clerk, advising Members that savings equivalent to the current budget for the Pocketbook (£17,000) had been agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee.

However, the Policy and Resources Committee recognised the recent work of the Pocket Book Working Party and the fact that the Pocketbook was popular with some Members, particularly the information pages. Therefore, the proposal was referred to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee, in order to seek Members' views as to the future of the Pocketbook.

Members were reminded that, should they wish to retain the Pocket Book, £17,000 would need to be found from elsewhere in the Town Clerk's budget. Your Committee subsequently agreed to survey all Members of the Court about the continued use of the pocket book. The pdf version of the Pocket Book was also revised in order to include bookmarks and this was circulated to all Members, along with the survey.

The survey took place in December 2014 and the results are summarised in this report. In total, 59 Members responded (47%); 31 voted in favour of the continuation of a pocket book in its present hard-copy format but 28 voted to make changes to the provision of it.

Of those voting for Option A (continued production of the full Pocket Book), there was a strongly held view that the current version was too bulky; with thinner paper and a smaller size desirable. However, it should be noted that, by reverting to the previous design and method of production, thereby achieving this smaller version, the savings achieved this year of £2,800 would be lost. Option C (production of a diary pages only Pocket Book), would contain less information than the current version, so it would be smaller in any event.

In the light of the results of the survey, the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee is now asked to consider how it wishes to proceed in relation to the future production of the Pocketbook.

Recommendations:

Members are asked to note the outcome of the December 2014 Pocket Book Survey and consider the future production of the Pocket Book.

Main Report

Background

1. The Town Clerk's Department produced the 2014/15 Pocketbook on the basis of the recommendations agreed by the Pocketbook Working Party, resulting in a saving of £2,800 compared to the previous version.
2. As part of the Service Based Review, savings equivalent to the current budget for the Pocketbook of £17,000 have been agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee.
3. The Policy and Resources Committee met on 2 October 2014 and discussed the general utility of the Pocketbook. The Committee acknowledged that the Pocketbook was popular with some Members, particularly the information pages, and therefore referred the proposal to the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee.
4. The Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee met on 27 October and agreed to survey all Members of the Court about the continued use of the Pocket Book. The Committee also asked for the pdf version of the Pocketbook to be revised, to include bookmarks. The revised pdf version was circulated with the survey questionnaire.

Current Position

5. The survey took place in December 2014 and the results are summarised below. The Survey asked Members to give consideration to one of the following future options for the pocket book and 59 Members responded, as follows:

Option A (31 votes)

A printed hard-copy Pocket Book comprising both diary and information pages (i.e. committee memberships, contact details, seniority lists, etc.) should continue to be produced.

Option B (19 votes)

A printed hard-copy Pocket Book should be discontinued and, in its place, a regularly updated electronic PDF version comprising both diary and information pages produced (compatible with mobile devices and PCs).

Option C (9 in total, with 1 expressing a preference for hard copy information only, rather than diary pages)

A printed hard-copy diary section only be produced, with the information pages being provided separately in a regularly updated electronic PDF format.

Current product

Members were also asked to provide feedback on the Pocket Book's current production and were asked to score the following from 1-5 (5 being excellent).

The number of scores (rated at 4 and above) were as follows:

- Information content - 34
- Information Accuracy – 31
- Paper quality – 21
- Legibility – 21
- Sleeve binding – 10

The various comments can be summarised as follows:

- Needs thinner paper (13)
- Needs to be smaller (11)
- Revert to leather cover (3)
- Cover too tight a fit (3)
- A loose leaf design (like a Filofax) would be preferable (3)
- Date box at the top of each page, so Members have space to write other things in each box (3)
- A month at a glance view (3)
- A pocket book can be referred to at semi-formal functions more readily than an i-pad, which can be heavy to carry and awkward to store at dinners. (2)
- Keep both paper and pdf versions for a year to enable Members to adjust. (1)

Conclusion

6. The response to the survey was 47%, which does not fully represent the views of all Members of the Court. The survey was first emailed to Members on 3 December, with responses requested by 18 December. A reminder was also sent to all Members on 15 December. The option of a hard copy survey form was also offered.
7. Of those who responded, 31 voted in support of Option A but there were 28 votes for options B and C, which indicates some appetite for change. However, by a slim margin, the status quo is preferred. Members are reminded that, if they reject the savings proposal for the Pocket Book, alternative savings would need to be found.
8. Members of the Culture, Heritage and Libraries Committee are asked to consider how they wish to proceed in relation to the future production of the Pocketbook.

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