



## Belfast City Council

Report to:	<b>Strategic Policy and Resources Committee</b>
Date:	<b>Friday, 23rd January, 2009</b>
Subject:	<b>Councillors Christmas Cards</b>
Reporting Officer:	<b>Mr. Liam Steele, Head of Committee and Members' Services (extension 6325)</b>
Contact Officer:	<b>Mrs. Julie Lilley, Members' Liaison Officer (extension 6321)</b>

### Relevant Background Information

Prior to the introduction of the Council's revised governance arrangements in 2007 the decision regarding the design of the Christmas card provided for use by Members was taken by the Policy and Resources (Members) Sub-Committee. Following the abolition of the Sub-Committees new arrangements were implemented to allow a suitable Christmas card to be chosen. In 2007, the Party Group Leaders were consulted on the design of the Christmas card and agreement was reached on a choice of card. In 2008, the Council produced a Corporate Christmas card and again, following consultation with the Party Group Leaders and taking account of the savings to be achieved by the Council in adopting this Corporate approach, it was decided that the Corporate Christmas card would be provided for use by the Members.

At the Council Meetings on 1st December and 5th January, a Member expressed disappointment at the greetings message contained in the Corporate card and it was agreed that the greetings message on future cards should read 'Happy Christmas'. It was further agreed that a report be brought to the Strategic Policy and Resources Committee to seek the Committee's view on how the form of the Christmas card should be determined in future.

### Key Issues

As stated above, the Council presently produces a corporate card for use by Members and the organisation as a whole. It is of course possible for a card to be designed exclusively for Members. Members are asked to determine which option they would prefer.

The second issue is approval of the design. The present procedure involves the Head of Committee and Members Services consulting with the Group Leaders. It is suggested that in future the design chosen should be sent to all Members for comment and a short paper be brought to the Committee to note comments and sign off the design chosen.

## **Recommendations**

The Committee is requested to decide:

- if in future years it wishes a Corporate Christmas card, if provided, to be used by both Senior Officers and Members or have a Christmas card designed exclusively for use by Councillors
- If a separate Councillor's card is to be produced I would recommend that the card design be approved by the Committee after consultation with the Members.