



Julian Bowrey, ODPM, wrote to local authorities on 14 July 2004 (see text below) about Local e-Government research.

ODPM's consultants MORI are now seeking senior local authority officers and members from London, the South East, the North East and Yorkshire & the Humber regions to attend workshops on 21 September in London and 23 September in Newcastle. Also for telephone surveys and depth interviews.

Participation is not restricted to e-champions or heads of IT and the involvement of service directors and managers, elected members and chief executives is encouraged.

If you are interested in taking part, please contact:

Neil Wholey at MORI on 020 7347 3177 or email neil.wholey@mori.com

Chief Executives
e-Champions

All local authorities in England

LOCAL E-GOVERNMENT - RESEARCH

I am writing to seek your help and support on a number of research projects which ODPM has commissioned. These are intended to check that our approach to date continues to strike a chord with your agenda, and importantly that the local e-Government programme is addressing the right priorities and communicating them effectively over the remaining 18 months of the programme.

For the programme to succeed in assisting all Councils to realise in full the benefits of local e-Government, its key components must be very focussed. They must also be co-ordinated, with each other and with other connected policies. While every Council has had an e-champion, at Member and officer level for several years, it is clear from feedback that the benefits of 'e' are by no means shared or understood by all those in leadership roles. We need to address this shortcoming.

In a similar vein the 22 National Projects are now entering a crucial phase – the creation and dissemination of products that are of use to all Councils. Although the National Projects have achieved a great deal, ultimately they will only be successful if they meet the needs of all Councils and are marketed and managed to that end.

Directgov – straight through to public services – has now replaced UKonline. Central to the success of Directgov will be effective links with Council websites - either with individual sites or via shared portals.

To ensure the programme overall and these individual projects are based on Councils' needs we have commissioned several market research studies. I am aware that you, and senior colleagues, receive regular requests to contribute to this sort of study. We have tried to keep the information sought to a minimum and to avoid duplication. We have also tried to minimise any survey fatigue by using a range of techniques to gather the information sought.

Consequently over the next few weeks, a sample of authorities will be approached for an electronic, telephone or paper-based survey, or participation in a focus group. Should you be contacted, I do hope that you can find time to participate.

For any general enquiries about the local e-Government research, or the programme in general, please email localegov@odpm.gsi.gov.uk or contact John Moyer on 020 7944 4134 or Ben Coburn on 020 7944 8744.

Yours sincerely

Julian Bowrey

Local e-Government programme communications activity (MORI)

Through ODPM's Directorate of Communications we have commissioned MORI to :

- assess local authority progress in tackling the e-Government agenda, and look at how they are doing this;
- assess communications between ODPM and authorities on e-Government;
- look at barriers local authorities encounter trying to meet this agenda and to what extent these are about resources, training and know-how, as opposed to cultural issues, leadership ability etc.

The project is will include :

- a summary review of the extant research on officer and member attitudes to e-Government, communications, including some interviews with a small sample of authorities;
- Two interactive workshops in July with another group of authorities, facilitated by MORI;
- a structured survey of chief officers and members on what they see as the issues and 'crunch points'.

Ben Page and Neil Wholey of MORI are leading this work for us. For further information please contact : neil.wholey@mori.com 020 7347 3000.

Directgov - Home and Community Franchise marketing (BuyIT)

In ODPM, the Home and Community Franchise of Directgov which is focussing on householder and environmental issues and services. The franchise is working closely with a Local e-Government National Project, Environment and Community Online Residents (ENCORE), led by Aylesbury Vale DC on behalf of the Buckinghamshire e-Government partnership. ENCORE has retained BuyIT Best Practice Group to produce and implement a communications strategy. BuyIT are also carrying out a web audit to find out what local authorities are doing with regard to specific services and transactions, and the team will be in touch shortly with all local authorities on this issue.

Efficiency Review – potential Local Government contribution (CapGemini)

A further study, focussed in the North West region, has been organised to assess the outcomes of the local e-government programme and the contribution it can make to the efficiencies and effectiveness agenda. The regional e-Government partnership NWeGG will be contacting authorities in the region to outline the contribution to the study that they can make.

National Projects Communications Programme (BuyIT)

BuyIT are also retained by the London Borough of Newham as our National Projects Communications office, following on from their work for the National e-Procurement project. Copies of a new brochure (code 04LRGG02291/NP) with information on all of the National Projects are available from ODPM publications centre: odpm@twoten.press.net or call 0870 1226 236. www.localgov.gov.uk also has links to National Projects websites.

Other Local Government research

More generally, ODPM's Local and Regional Government Research Unit has commissioned the Centre for Local and Regional Government Research at Cardiff University, together with a range of partners, to carry out a survey as part of our ten-year overarching meta-evaluation of the Local Government Modernisation Agenda. Further information can be obtained from : kate.millward@odpm.gsi.gov.uk or downej@cardiff.ac.uk or go to www.clrgr.cf.ac/lqma

