Public Sector News

Jane Inman, Communications and Information Manager, Environment and Economy, Warwickshire County Council (Janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk)

Keeping within the Law

You have probably already seen mention in various places of the new website published by Facet which is edited by Paul Pedley of the Economist Intelligence Unit and which provides access to copyright and information law. It is a subscription database and designed to ensure information professionals have somewhere to turn fro information on copyright, freedom of information and the re-use of public sector information. http://www.kwtl.co.uk

Re-use of public sector information

The Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations which came into force in 2005 are designed to encourage the use in other ways of information collected and produced by public sector bodies. The types of information that might be re-used include meteorological, traffic and financial data, maps or tourist information. But it is not always that easy, and the EU has launched a consultation which seeks to evaluate the impact of the legislation. http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/policy/psi/index_en.htm

They work for you

Keeping track of how your MP is voting or in fact the activities in the House of Commons of any MPs, as well as the contributions of Members of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Members of the Scottish Parliament can be done through the Theyworkforyou website http://www.theyworkforyou.com.

The site is run by mySociety, a charity whose stated aims are to build "websites that give people simple, tangible benefits in the civic and community aspects of their lives" and teach the public and voluntary sectors, through demonstration, "how to most efficiently use the Internet to improve lives." The site is campaigning to change the way Bills are published, because it believes they could be published in a way which makes it possible for ordinary people to understand exactly what is being voted on and by whom.

Parliamentary website

Meanwhile the House of Commons Commission reported that the redesign of the Parliament website over the last two years has cost in excess of £3million. The work included a new design and navigation and a better search engine.

Please look out for *Finding British Official Information. Official publishing in the digital age* Jane Inman and Howard Picton, to be published by Chandos later this year.

Public Sector News is supplied by ALGIS (The Affiliation of Local Government Information Specialists) which represents information professionals providing information services to local authority staff and elected members. Jane Inman is currently Chair of ALGIS. ALGIS welcomes anyone with an interest in public sector information who feels they would benefit from being part of a community working in the same area. For more information go to http://www.algis.org.uk.