

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 27 OCTOBER 2014

Present:

Councillor N Barker - (Chair)
Councillor J Austen
Councillor G Baxter MBE
Councillor J Windle

Also Present:

Mr M Derbyshire – Members' ICT and Training Officer
Mr F Powell – Senior Governance Officer

38/14 Apology for Absence

An apology for absence from the meeting was received from Councillor T J Moon.

39/14 Minutes of Last Meeting

RESOLVED – That the Minutes of the meeting of the Member Development Working Group held on 30 July 2014 be approved as a correct record.

40/14 Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Member Development Working Group held on 30 July 2014

The Working Group requested details of progress in respect of Minute No 31/14 – Member Data System. The Working Group requested that officers provide details of progress on the introduction of the Member Data System to its next meeting.

RESOLVED – That the Senior Governance Officer be requested to establish what progress had been made in terms of the introduction of the Member Data System and that a report on this matter be submitted to the next meeting of the Working Group.

(Senior Governance Officer)

41/14 Member Induction Arrangements: Proposals for May 2015

The Working Group considered a report of the Senior Governance Officer in respect of proposals for Member Induction Arrangements for May 2015 following the District Council elections.

Following consideration of the draft proposals by the Working Group at its meetings in February and May 2014 and further discussions by officers, a draft report on Member Induction Arrangements: Proposals for May 2015 was submitted to the Strategic Alliance Management Team on 18 October. In preparing the draft programme for member induction regard had been had to the evaluation undertaken in July 2011 a number of key principles had been followed:-

- That the Induction Programme should be Member led;
- That the Programme should be interactive and practical;
- That the Programme should provide practical and useful information without being overwhelming;
- That the Programme should provide an opportunity for Members to share their knowledge and experience with colleagues, particularly new elected Members;
- That there should be some element of Scrutiny skills training.

The Group was advised that it was proposed to issue an updated copy of the Becoming a Councillor Guide both in hard copy and via the Council's website. Hard copies would also be made available for pre-election briefings involving the Returning Officer and Candidates for the District Council. It was also proposed to prepare an induction pack which would be made available to all Members elected in May 2015. It was proposed that the pack contain:-

- Welcome letter from the Chief Executive;
- Manager and officer contacts list with explanation of how to use the Contacts Database on the I-Pad;
- LGA's Being a Councillor Guide;
- Details of how to access the Council's Constitution online (side of A4);
- Details of Members' Allowances (side of A4);
- Rights and responsibilities under Freedom of Information (FOI), Data Protection Act (DPA) and Access to Information (side of A4);
- Guidance on Member use of I-Pads (side of A4);
- Senior Management Structure;
- Letter from Local Government Ombudsman;
- Timetable of Meetings 2015/2016;
- Separate envelope containing a number of forms which should be completed at the first induction session on 11 May 2015:-
 - New starter form;
 - Payment form;
 - Register of interest form;
 - ID pass form;
 - Car insurance form;
 - Fair processing notice for details to be used by the Council.

The three induction sessions that the Working Group already supported in principle were intended to be “light touch” and provide a general introduction to the work of the Council, the roles of Members and officers, so as to enable Members to familiarise themselves with key contacts and processes. They were not intended to provide a detailed overview of legislative provisions which may be overwhelming and which could be covered in later Member Involvement Days or Committee specific training. The intention was to provide a positive introduction to the work of a new Council in May 2015 and foster participation in Member events.

The Programme proposed was as follows:-

Session One (attendance is necessary for all Councillors)

Monday 11 May 2015 from 5.30pm (to start with a buffet)

To cover:

- Signing of acceptance of office
- Photographs
- Completion of forms (listed on page 3 of these minutes)
- Introduction to the Chief Executive and Executive Directors

Session Two (attendance is recommended for all Councillors)

Wednesday 13 May 2015 at 5.30pm (to start with a buffet)

To cover:

- Roles and Responsibilities of Council, Councillors and Officers, Assistant Director Governance and Monitoring Officer and Governance Team
- Planning (Assistant Director – Planning and Environmental Health)
- Licensing (Licensing Coordinator)
- Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Assistant Director – Customer Service and Improvement)

The four items will give an introduction into each subject and, as such, will be no longer than 25 minutes with a 20 minute break in between the second and third sessions.

Session Three (attendance is recommended for all Councillors)

Wednesday 20 May 2015 at 5.30pm (to start with a buffet)

To cover:

- Local Government Finance (Executive Director - Operations)
- Corporate Plan and the Growth and Transformation Agenda (Chief Executive, Executive Director – Transformation and Assistant Director – Customer Service)
- Handling the Media and Social Media (Communications Manager)
- What Kind of People are Councillors? (Governance Team, given at the request of the Member Development Working Group)

The four items will give an introduction into each subject and, as such, will be no longer than 25 minutes with a 20 minute break in between the second and third sessions.

The Councils' Members' IT and Training Officer will hold a drop in event for Members an hour before the commencement of the second and third Events on use of I-Pads.

The details of the Committee specific training proposed were as follows:-

- Planning (Planning Services Manager/Development Management Team Leader)
- Licensing (Licensing Co-ordinator)
- Audit (Executive Director – Operations)
- Scrutiny skills (Overview and Scrutiny Manager)

Members had also indicated an intention to carry out a tour of the District and it was proposed that this would be led by the Assistant Director – Leisure, Rykneld Homes Limited and the Strategic Partnership Co-ordinator. The tour would be arranged by the Governance Team.

During the course of the Working Group's consideration of the report the following comments were made by Members:-

- That a copy of the dates and sessions for the Members Induction following the May 2015 elections be made available in the candidate pack sent out to all candidates for the District Council elections in May 2015;
- Members noted the tight timescale for the return of laptops by Members who had either stood down or were not re-elected to the District Council in May 2015.
- The view was expressed that from May 2015 that all Members should use I-Pads, subject to those Members who had a disability or requested to use a lap top.

RESOLVED – To Recommend:-

- (1) That an updated version of the Becoming a Councillor Guide be prepared and made available on the Council's website and in hard copy format for Members and be available for inclusion in the candidates pack for all persons standing in the May 2015 District Council elections, subject to the Working Group having sight of the draft finalised version prior to the publication of the document.
- (2) That the induction pack be prepared for circulation to all Members following the District Council's elections in May 2015 and that it be made available electronically and in hard copy form and that a copy of the induction itinerary be included in the candidates pack for the May 2015 elections.
- (3) That the arrangements for the Members Induction sessions to be held on Monday, 11 May, Wednesday, 13 May and Wednesday, 20 May 2015 be supported and the contents of the sessions be as follows:-

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The Councils' Members' IT and Training Officer will hold a drop in event for Members an hour before sessions two and three on use of I-Pads.

The four items will give an introduction into each subject and, as such, will be no longer than 25 minutes with a 20 minute break in between the second and third sessions.

- (4) That the above recommendations be reported to Cabinet for its consideration and approval.

(Governance Team)

42/14 East Midlands Regional Programme 2014-2015: Where Are We Now – What do the changes in Welfare Reform, Housing and Planning mean for Local Government

The Working Group received a presentation from Councillors J Austen and N Barker on the Where Are We Now – What do the Changes in Welfare Reform, Housing and Planning mean for Local Government. The above Members attended the course at East Midlands Councils on 8 October 2014.

A copy of the presentation is attached as **Appendix A** to these Minutes.

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the content of the Where Are We Now – What do the Changes in Welfare Reform, Housing and Planning mean for Local Government presentation by Councillors J Austen and N Barker be noted.
- (2) That Councillors J Austen and N Barker be requested to give the Where Are We Now – What do the Changes in Welfare Reform, Housing and Planning mean for Local Government presentation to the next Member Involvement Half Day on 2 December 2014.

(Governance Team)

43/14 Planning Committee: Member Training Event – 2 October 2014 – Evaluation Results

The Working Group considered the evaluation statistics and the comments submitted by Members in respect of the Planning Committee Member Training Event held on 2 October 2014.

Members were reminded that this was an interactive session led by Mr David Elworthy from the Planning Advisory Service (PAS).

RESOLVED:-

- (1) That the Working Group notes the statistical information/comments provided by Members in respect of the Planning Committee Member Event held on 2 October 2014 as detailed in **Appendix B** to these Minutes.
- (2) That in future, where appropriate, that the Parish/Town Councils be invited to participate in Member Training events where possible.

(Governance Team)

44/14 Member Involvement Half Day – 7 October 2014 – Evaluation Results

The Working Group considered the evaluation statistics and comments submitted by Members in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 7 October 2014. During the Committee's consideration of the Evaluation Report the following comment was made by a Member:-

- The session was too short and another topic would have been beneficial.

RESOLVED:- That the Working Group notes the statistical information/comments provided by Members in respect of the Member Involvement Half Day held on 7 October 2014 as detailed in **Appendix C** to these Minutes.

(Governance Team)

45/14 The Provision of App Training and Continuous Servicing of Members I-Pads

The Working Group considered the report of the Members' ICT Training Officer. The purpose of the report was to:-

- Consider how the provision of Members' ICT Training was structured from now until the new municipal year 2015/2016.
- Ascertain how Members I-Pads and lap tops were to be serviced from now until the new municipal year 2015/16.
- Provide a presentation on the extranet concentrating specifically on the Members portal, new provision arrangements.

Members were advised that training was now available for them on the following Apps:-

Pages

Pages was the word processing App which had all of the functionality of, and is compatible with, Microsoft Word. Having knowledge of Pages would enable a Member to create documents, letters etc and store them on the I-Pad itself.

Numbers

Numbers is the spreadsheet App which has all of the functionality of, and were compatible, with Microsoft Excel. Having knowledge of Numbers would enable a Member to create spreadsheets and charts.

Keynote

Keynote is the App which enables the user to produce slides and presentations for large audiences. It is compatible with Microsoft PowerPoint.

The Working Group was advised that since the commencement of I-Pad training for Members in April 2013 regular sessions had been held on all I-Pad Apps and this had taken place both at Saltergate and The Arc. To-date 37% of the Bolsover Members and 17% of the North East Derbyshire District Council Members had attended at least one session.

Between now and the end of the current municipal year the following dates for training on various Apps for Members was planned:-

- Pages – 3 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Numbers – 10 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Keynote – 17 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Keynote – 20 November 10.00 am – 2.00 pm at The Arc;
- Pages – 21 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Keynote – 21 November 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at The Arc;
- Numbers – 28 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Keynote – 28 November 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Email and Extranet – 2 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Email and Extranet – 5 December 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Email and Extranet – 8 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Email and Extranet – 12 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Flexible Drop In Session - 19 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Flexible Drop In Session – 19 December 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Saltergate.

The Working Group was advised that given that the operating system for I-Pads (IOS) was updated every month it was important that Members bring in their I-Pads for regular updates and servicing, both for the operating system and Apps.

RESOLVED – That the Working Group:-

- (1) Approves the following arrangements and dates for training on the various Apps in respect of Members use of I-Pads:-

- Pages – 3 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Numbers – 10 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Keynote – 17 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Keynote – 20 November 10.00 am – 2.00 pm at The Arc;
- Pages – 21 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Keynote – 21 November 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at The Arc;
- Numbers – 28 November 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Keynote – 28 November 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Email and Extranet – 2 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Email and Extranet – 5 December 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Email and Extranet – 8 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at Saltergate;
- Email and Extranet – 12 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Flexible Drop In Session - 19 December 10.00 am – 12.00 pm at The Arc;
- Flexible Drop In Session – 19 December 2.00 pm – 4.00 pm at Saltergate.

- (2) Supports the arrangements proposed for a service plan to be implemented which provide regular servicing and updates for Members I-Pads.

(Members ICT and Training Officer)

46/14 East Midlands Councils Course: The Future of Local Government and Public Services in the next Parliament – 21 November 2014

The Working Group considered a report on an event to be held by East Midlands Councils: “The Future of Local Government and Public Services in the next Parliament” to be held on Friday, 21 November 2014.

The purpose of the event was to provide Members with an opportunity to:-

- Engage directly with decision makers from the three main political parties on the future of Local Government following the 2015 General Election.
- Enable Councillors to highlight concerns, challenges and opportunities for Local Government in their communities.
- Provide Councillors with an opportunity to inform the future direction of public services.
- Provide an opportunity for Councillors to reflect with colleagues at a national and local level on the future of Local Government post the 2015 General Election.

The Council had been allocated three places at the event. Attendance at the event was free and it would be held at the Leicester City Football Club, from 9.30 am to 2.30 pm.

RESOLVED:- That the Working Group supports the Council's attendance at the East Midlands Councils – The Future of Local Government and Public Services in the next Parliament event on Friday, 21 November 2014, and notes Councillors Barker and Gordon had expressed an interest in attending and that a third Member would be nominated to attend the event.

(Governance Team)

47/14 Any Other Business

At this point in the meeting the Working Group received a brief presentation from the Members ICT and Training Officer in respect of the Members Portal, with particular relevance to the Member Development section.

RESOLVED:- That the presentation on the Members Portal in respect of Member Development be noted.

(ICT Training Officer/Senior Governance Officer)

48/14 Date of Next Meeting

The Working Group were informed and noted the date of the next meeting would be discussed and agreed with the Chair and that they would be advised accordingly.

(Senior Governance Officer)

Appendix A

Appendix A is a separate PDF document, please click on the link below to gain access to this Appendix:-

East Midlands Regional Programme 2014-2015: Where Are We Now – What do the changes in Welfare Reform, Housing and Planning mean for Local Government

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP – 27 OCTOBER 2014

PLANNING COMMITTEE: MEMBER EVENT

THURSDAY, 2 OCTOBER 2014

RESULTS ANALYSIS

Members Attended: 17 - 12 from North East Derbyshire District Council, 5 from Bolsover District Council
(7 Members elected prior to May 2011, 5 Members elected in May 2011) (These figures are for North East Derbyshire District Councillors only)

Total Number of forms completed: 17

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Did not answer
The information included in the Programme was helpful in setting out the main elements of the event	13 (76%)	4 (24%)				
I found the presentations helpful and increased my knowledge and understanding of the role of Members and officers work on Planning Committee :						
Making Defensible Planning Decisions – including Material Planning Considerations	12 (71%)	5 (29%)				
Planning Inspectorate Appeal Decision	7 (41%)	9 (53%)				1 (6%)

In what ways do you think events such as this could be improved?

- Have a Chair independent of the area discussed to minimise interventions.
- More events on this level, very interesting.
- Longer.
- Longer time/workshops.
- More involvement of Parish Council Members? Session about how to oppose.
- It was very helpful having a joint session, hope we can get more Bolsover Members next time.
- Excellent content and communication – so none.

Do you have any further comments to make about the event?

- Very informative.
- Good expert speaker makes all the difference.
- Very useful, informative.
- Enjoyed the session.
- Would like it to be available to the whole Committee – not an optional event.

MEMBER DEVELOPMENT WORKING GROUP – 27 OCTOBER 2014

MEMBERS INVOLVEMENT HALF DAY – TUESDAY, 7 OCTOBER 2014

RESULTS ANALYSIS

Members Attended: 12 (8 Members elected prior to May 2011, 4 elected in May 2011)

Total Number of Forms Completed: 9

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither agree or disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Did not answer
The information included in the Programme was helpful in setting out the main elements of the event	3 (33%)	6 (67%)				
I found the presentations helpful and increased my knowledge and understanding of the following areas:						
• Equalities Update	2 (22%)	7 (88%)				
• Medium Term Financial Plan/ Financial Governance	2 (22%)	7 (88%)				

In what ways do you think events such as this could be improved?

The following comments were made:

- If more elected Members attended from all parties.
- Spelling checks, i.e. Polices – Policies, Confernece – Conference.
- Could they start at 10.00 am due to traffic problems getting here for 9.30 am and children going to school and lollipop people at crossings.
- Get more Members in.

Do you have any further comments to make about the event?

The following comments were made:

- Further information to improve LA Services.
- New legislation and Government Acts and Laws.
- Interesting and informative.
- Well presented.
- Two good issues were presented and understood.
- We have to improve the Involvement (the Members) to come to the meetings.